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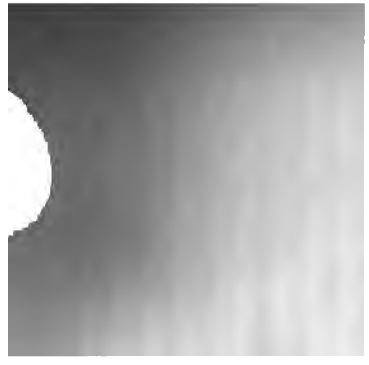

THE

ORIGIN AND HISTORY

OF

THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

AND OF

THE EARLY LITERATURE IT EMBODIES

BY

GEORGE P. MARSH

AUTHOR OF 'LECTURES ON THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE' ETC. ETC.

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THE Lectures which form the basis of the present volume were delivered at the Lowell Institute, in Boston, in the United States, in the autumn and winter of 1860–1861. They were prepared in the preceding summer, with such aids only as my private library afforded, and my departure for Europe in the spring of the latter year has prevented me from giving them so complete a revision as I had hoped to bestow upon them. I have, however, made such additions and other improvements as the time and means at my command would permit, and, having been invited to publish the Lectures first in England, I have endeavoured to remove from them whatever might seem designed exclusively for the American public, and have adapted them, as far as I was able, to the common wants of all who desire to study the literary history of the English tongue.

DOMI NUS ILLE
NIXA TIO MEA
Taylor Institution.

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LECTURES

ON THE

ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

LECTURE I.

INTRODUCTORY.

THE subject of the course upon which I am about to enter will be, as nearly as I am able to express it in a comprehensive title, the Origin and History of the English Language, and of the Early Literature it embodies. I shall not notice the works of those natives of England who have written, on domestic as well as on more general topics, in foreign tongues, Latin and French, because those works, though composing a part of the national literature, do not belong to the literature of the English language, which alone is embraced in the plan of the present readings. I confine myself to the history of *early* English literature for two reasons. The first is the impossibility of surveying, in so short a series of discourses, the whole field of English intellectual action; the second, that the harmonious execution of my purpose — which is to discuss the two branches of the subject, language and literature, with constant reference to their reciprocal influence on each other — excludes those periods when their history had ceased to be concurrent.

The English language had already gone through its principal phases when the earliest of the works, which are now collec-

tively known to most grammarians, lexicographers, and common readers as the body of English literature, made its appearance. A single epoch witnessed the completion of that organic action by which the English speech was developed from its elements, and the beginning of that one era of English authorship, the products of which still subsist as a consciously-felt and recognised agency in the world of letters. The language had passed the stages of infancy and youth, attained to the ripe perfection of manhood, and thus completed its physiological history, before the existing period of its literature began. In treating the two, then, the speech and its literature, conjointly, I am necessarily limited to the centuries when both were undergoing the successive processes of evolution and growth, and when the progress of each was dependent on that of the other, and conditioned by it.

This period extends from a little before the commencement of the reign of Henry III. to the latter years of Queen Elizabeth, and thus embraces not far from four hundred years. During this space, the intellect of England, stirred at once by inborn impulses, and by external influences, had become luxuriantly productive, and was constantly struggling to find articulate symbols and syntactical combinations, wherein to embody and communicate the vivid images, deep thoughts, and earnest aspirations which it had either spontaneously originated, or appropriated from the literatures of ancient or foreign nations, while the language, stimulated to a continually renewed evolution of organic action by the necessities of a regenerated literary, political, social, and commercial life, was gradually expanding into a largeness of capacity, and moulding itself into a fitness of form, to serve as a vehicle for the vast, and varied, and strange conceptions it was now called upon to express.

This process, or rather this double series of processes, was completed, as I have said, about the end of the sixteenth century, and our view of the language and its monuments will embrace little which belongs to later dates, except so far as I

may incidentally refer to subsequent verbal forms or intellectual products, as results of tendencies already manifested in the English mind and its speech, in the era which we are more particularly considering.

The tongue of England and her intellectual culture had now respectively attained to a stage of advancement where neither imperiously demanded new capabilities in the other. The language no longer showed the want of that affluence, and polish, and clearness, and force, which human speech can acquire only by long use as the medium of written composition in the various forms of narrative, imaginative and discursive literature, and, in modern times at least, by the further aid of exposure to the stimulating and modifying influences of the history, and poetry, and philosophy, and grammar, and vocabulary of foreign tongues. The English mind and heart, meanwhile, had been gathering knowledge, and experience, and strength, and catholicity of sympathy, and they were now able to expand to the full dimensions of their growth, gird themselves to their mightiest moral and intellectual efforts, and burst into song, or sermon, or story, or parliamentary or forensic harangue, without fear that the mother-tongue of England would want words to give adequate and melodious expression to their truest feelings, their most solemn convictions, and their loftiest aspirations.*

The history of this philological and intellectual progress is the too vast theme of the present course; and if I shall succeed in conveying a general notion of the gradual living processes by which the English tongue and its literature grew up, from the impotent utterance and feeble conceptions of the thirteenth century, to the divine power of expression displayed in Tyndale's version of the New Testament, in the sixteenth, and the revelation of man's moral nature in the dramas of Shakespeare, at the commencement of the seventeenth, I shall have accomplished the task I have undertaken.

* See Illustration I. at the end of this lecture.

The linguistic facts and literary illustrations required for the comprehension of such a sketch will be drawn chiefly from sources familiar indeed to many of the audience, but which do not come within the habitual observation and knowledge of what is called the reading public; but I shall endeavour not to advance theories, employ technical terms, or introduce citations, which will not easily be understood by any person possessed of sufficient literary culture to feel an intelligent interest in the subject.

In all inquiries into the history of past ages, whether as respects the material concerns or the intellectual action of men, the question constantly presents itself: what was the inherent worth, or what is the surviving practical importance, of the objects, or the acts, the monuments of which we are investigating?—and hence we must ask: what was the actual significance of that bygone literature, into which, both for its own sake as an interesting chapter in the annals of the human mind, and for the sake of the language, of whose changes it constitutes the only record, we propose to look? The few examples which can be cited will not, of themselves, suffice to convey an adequate conception of the special character, still less of the wealth, of old English literature; but I shall endeavour to illustrate them by such biographical or historical notices as may serve to show their connection with the social and intellectual life of the periods and the people to which they belong, and thus help my hearers to arrive at conclusions for themselves which I may not think it necessary in all cases formally to express. I shall strive thus to invest my subject with a higher philosophical interest than belongs to mere historical grammar, and the considerations which suggest themselves in our survey will, I hope, give some additional incitement to the impulse now beginning to be felt by so many scholars towards the study of the neglected and forgotten authors of ages which want, indeed, the polish and refinement of subsequent centuries, but are, nevertheless, animated and informed with a spontaneous life, a freshness, and

vigour, rare in the productions of eras more advanced in artificial culture.

A literature which extends through four centuries, and which was successively exposed to the stimulating influences of such radical revolutions in Church and in State, of such important advances in every branch of knowledge, such achievements in fine and industrial art, and such triumphs of human power over physical nature, cannot be described by any one series of epithets, nor, indeed, were its traits always so marked that all its products are recognizable as unmistakably of English growth. But it may be said, in general, that, more than most other equally imaginative literatures, it was practically and visibly connected with the actual social being of man, with his enjoyments and sufferings in this world, and his hopes and fears in reference to another. It was a reflection of the waking life of an earnest, active nation, not, like so much of the contemporaneous expression of Continental genius, a magic mirror showing forth the unsubstantial dreams of an idle, luxurious, and fantastic people.

The eminently practical character of old English literature is due, in a considerable degree, to the political condition of the English government. The insular position of England made that kingdom, from the beginning, more than any other European state, independent of the international combinations which, in a great degree, controlled the destiny and moulded the institutions and characters of the Continental peoples, and this isolation of the government was felt and shared by the nation. It entered into the English heart, and has, in all the best periods of English literature, constituted a marked and peculiar characteristic of its genius. While the writers of most other European countries have had their periods and their schools, when now classic, now romantic, now Gallic, and now Gothic influences predominated, and stamped with a special character, not merely the works of individual authors, but the entire literary effort of the time, the literature of England has never

submitted itself to any such trammels, but has always maintained a self-guided, if not a wholly self-inspired, existence; and this is perhaps the best reason that can be given why Continental critics, trained, as until recently they have been, in the traditions and observances of their schools, have so generally proved unable to comprehend the drift and true significance of English letters.

The political and literary independence of England grew with the diminution of its continental territory. So long as the British throne held any important portion of its dominions by a feudal tenure which obliged it to acknowledge the suzerainty of the crown of France, it was a party to the Continental political compact, and, as such, involved in all the feuds, and warfares, and conflicts of social and industrial interests which distracted that organization. And, what was even a greater evil, it was subject to the overshadowing domination of Rome, which claimed and received the homage theoretically due to the eternal city as the earthly metropolis of the universal Church, but practically accorded to her as the natural representative of the temporal supremacy exercised by the ancient mistress and capital of the world. But though England shared with the Continent in the baneful influence of this spiritual and semi-political despotism, yet it was only at comparatively rare intervals that it was felt and submitted to, in its full extent, by the English government and people. There was always something of a disposition to inquire into the foundation of the authority claimed by the Roman pontiff, to doubt the infallibility of his decisions, and to tread on forbidden ground, by debating questions which, according to the doctrine of papal supremacy, had been for ever settled by a tribunal incapable of error and armed with the thunderbolts of Heaven for the enforcement of its decrees.

The Romish see itself, well knowing that the geographical position of England secured it from physical coercion, was slow to proceed to extremities against a crown and a people who might, at any time, despise its mandates with impunity. Hence

the relations between the papacy and England were generally like those between a sovereign who shuts his eyes to insurrectionary movements in a rebellious province too strong or too distant to be reduced by force of arms, and a people that submits under protest, and is biding its time to throw off a foreign and obnoxious yoke. The English nation and its writers, then, were not habitually sunk in that humiliating submission to the papacy which long paralyzed the intellectual energy of other Christian races, and restrained them from the discussion of high and noble themes, nor was the occupant of the Roman see regarded with that abject reverence which so often in Continental history bestowed upon him the name and attributes of the Most High. While Charles V. of France, in the great schism of the fourteenth century, a little before the close of his reign, was making, as Froissart says, 'a specyall commandement throughoute his realme, that every manne shulde take and repute Clement for pope, and that every manne shulde obey him as God on erthe,'* Wycliffe, cheered and sustained by many of the nobility as well as commonalty of England†, was

* Froissart, Lord Berners's Translation, I. c. 345. See Illustration II. at the end of this lecture.

† 'Hodid men were cleped thanne the Lolardis, that wold never avale here hood in presens of the Sacrament, of whech at that tyme these were the principales: —William Nevyle, [Sir] Lodewic Clifforth, Jon Clambowh, Richard Sturry, Thomas Latymer, and werst of alle, Jon Mountagu [Earl of Salisbury] * * And of J. Mountagu thei sei he was a gret distroyer of ymages.'—*Capgrave's Chronicle*, p. 245, an. 1387.

These noblemen and gentlemen seem to have been rather obstinate heretics, for seven years later, as we learn from Capgrave, p. 260, an. 1394, 'The Lolardis set up scrowis at Westminster and at Poules, with abhominable accusaciones of hem that long to the Cherch, whech sounded in destruccioune of the Sacramentis, and of statutes of the Cherch. The meynteyneris of the puple that were so infect were these:—Richard Storry, Lodewik Clifforth, Thomas Latymer, Jon Mountagw. Thei were principal instructouris of heretikes. The kyng, whan he had conceyved the malice of these men, he cleped hem to his presens and snybbed hem; forbad hem eke thei schuld no more meynten no swech opiniones.'

The Earl of Salisbury, at least, died in the faith he had espoused, for, when in 1400, at 'Cicetir,' an insurrection was put down and 'the town drow hem [the rebels] oute of the Abbey, and smet of many of her hedis,' it appears that 'the erl of Salesbury was ded there; and worthi, for he was a gret favorère of the

impressing upon Urban, then recognised by the English nation as the lawful incumbent of the papal throne, the lesson that Victor Emanuel and Garibaldi are, with stronger means of 'moral suasion,' inculcating upon a stiff-necked successor of Urban to-day. 'I take as bileve,' wrote Wycliffe to the pope, 'that none schulde sue the Pope, ne no saint that now is in hevene, bot in alsmyche as he sued Christ: for James and John errid, and Peter and Powl sinned. And this I take as holesome counseile, that the Pope leeve his worldly lordschip to worldly lords, as Christ gaf him, and move speedily all his clerks to do so; for thus did Christ, and taught thus his disciples, till the fende had blynded this world. * * * And I suppose of our Pope that he will not be Antichrist and reverse Christ in this wirking to the contrary of Christ's wille. For if he summons agens resoun by him or any of his, and pursue this unskilful summoning, he is an open Antichrist.'*

Lollardis, a despiser of sacramentis, for he wold not be confessed when he schuld deie.' — *Capgrave*, p. 276.

* The orthography of this passage is evidently somewhat modernised, and there are apparently some trifling verbal errors in the text, but I print it as I find it in Vaughan's Life of Wycliffe, ii. 456. The deliberate judgment of Thomas à Becket, stoutly as the interests of his order led him to uphold the monstrous abuse which exempted the clergy from the jurisdiction of lay criminal tribunals, was far from favourable to the papal court. In writing to Cardinal Albert, he said: 'I know not how it always happens that, at the court of Rome, Barabbas is delivered and Christ condemned and crucified.' I cite from Bonnemère, Histoire des Paysans, i. 163, which I am happy to have an opportunity to recommend as a work of great research and merit.

Capgrave, anno 1385, says: 'In the IX ȝere of this king, John Wiclef, the orgon of the devel, the enemy of the Cherch, the confusion of men, the ydol of heresie, the meroure of ypocrisie, the norischer of scisme, be the rithful dome of God, was smet with a horibil paralsie thorw oute his body,' &c. &c. But notwithstanding this bitterness against Wycliffe, he expresses no disapprobation of the application of Lynch law to those who, in 1358, 'broute the bulles' for the excommunication of certain living transgressors against the Church, and the exhumation of the bodies of their deceased accomplices. He cites, with apparent assent, A.D. 1390, the common opinion that Urban was 'a very tiraunt,' and had deposed the English cardinal Adam 'for non other cause' than that 'he lettid him mech of his wrong desire;' and he evidently believes that Pope Innocent IV., who had interfered with the right of royal and seignorial ecclesiastical patronage in England, died by the visitation of God in 1251, after having been summoned to judgment by Robert Grostede, late Bishop of Lincoln, who appeared to him in a

The occasional contests between the Continental sovereigns and the popes chiefly concerned the temporalities of the Church, or grew out of questions affecting them, and there was, usually, less disposition to meddle with doctrinal points or matters of ecclesiastical discipline than in England.* There a bolder spirit of inquiry prevailed, and though the sovereigns professed due spiritual obedience to the papacy, we may apply to many of them what Fuller says of Henry VII.: 'To the Pope he was submissive, not servile, his devotion being seldom without design, so using his Holiness, that he seldom stooped down to him in any low reverence, but, with the same gesture, he took up something in order to his own ends.' †

The independence of the English people gave their literature a freer character, brought it to bear on all their interests, spiritual and temporal, and thus invested it with a reality and straightforward naturalness of thought and expression not often met with in the contemporaneous writings of Germanic or Romance authors.

The reality of old English literature, and its truth to nature, do by no means imply that it is not as highly original and inventive as those of other countries, which are less faithful expressions of the every-day thoughts, and feelings, and passions of humanity. No man supposes that Callot's fantastic figures are more imaginative than Raphael's life-like creations; or that Da

vision, 'and smet him on the side with the pike of his crosse staff, and seid thus: Rise, wrech, and come to the dom.'

Nor does the chronicler manifest any indignation at the ungracious reception of an unjust bull issued in 1402: 'In this tyme cam oute a bulle fro the Court [Curia Romana], whech revokid alle the graces that had be graunted many ȝeres before; of whech ros mech slaundir and obliqui ageyn the Cherch; for thei seide pleynly that it was no more trost to the Pope writing than to a dogge tail; for as ofte as he wold gader mony, so oftyn wold he anullen eld graces and graunt newe. —*Capgrave*, p. 281.

* The Guelf and Ghibelline feud in Italy, though originating in the rivalry of two German princely houses, was in general, however disguised, at bottom, little else than a contest between the imperial throne and the papal see for the temporal supremacy, which both aspired to wield as the representative and successor of the Roman Cæsars.

† Church History, iv. 155.

Vinci wrought under a higher inspiration when he drew his caricatures than when he designed the Last Supper. The early literature of England, which originated comparatively few of what are technically called romantic works, was abundantly fertile in the exercise of that best function of the imagination, the creation of forms of humanity whose constitution and action are, throughout, in accordance with the law of man's nature; and we find in it, before we arrive at the close of the fourteenth century, the germs of every species of inventive composition which English bards and dramatists have since made illustrious. Indeed, so truly did imaginative and creative power characterise the early vernacular literature of England, that, in spite of the life-like, homely truth of its personages and its scenery, actual historical narrative had but a very subordinate place in it. The northern and southern extremes of Christendom, Gothic Iceland and Romance Spain, as well as polished France, had produced historical works which almost dispute the palm with Herodotus*, but their literatures, though teeming with extravagant fictions and elaborate and cunningly wrought versified compositions, could not yet boast a single great poet. Anglo-Norman England, on the other hand, had given birth to no annalist who deserves the name of a historian; but had, in Chaucer, bestowed upon the world a poet who, both in sympathy with external nature, and in the principal element of dramatic composition — the conception of character, the individualising of his personages — had far outstripped whatever else the imaginative literature of Christendom had produced.

In these studies, the progress of our investigations is often arrested by the want of sufficient materials to enable us satisfactorily to determine the true character of particular branches of literary effort, or even to decide questions of pure grammatical form. The publication of such of the remaining memorials of early English and Anglo-Saxon literature as still survive only in manuscript will do something to supply our

* See Illustration III. at the end of this lecture.

defect of knowledge in these particulars; but much of what we know to have once existed in those dialects has irrecoverably perished, and the extant records of the intellectual action of England in the fourteenth and previous centuries have come down to us in such an imperfect, and often evidently corrupted form, that we shall never be as well acquainted with the grammar and the literature of the Anglo-Saxon and the transition periods as with those of the corresponding eras in the history of Continental philology.

The destruction of the products of Anglo-Saxon, of Anglo-Norman, and of early English genius, occasioned by the Danish invasions, the civil wars of different periods, and the suppression of the monasteries in the sixteenth century, is in many aspects much to be deplored, but for such apparent calamities there are, in the scheme of Providence, always sufficient compensations. Not only must the old crop be removed from the earth to make way for the new, but it must also be in a good measure consumed, before adequate stimulus can be felt for the industry which is required to produce another harvest. We have abundant reason to rejoice that Homer, and Thucydides, and Plato, and many master-pieces of the Greek dramatists, that Terence, and Cicero, and Horace, and Virgil, and much of Tacitus, have escaped the casualties which have destroyed the works of other scarcely less renowned ancient authors; but whether the existence of the whole body of Greek and Roman literature, down to the present day, would have been an advantage to modern genius, is quite another question. I have heard one of the most accomplished of American scholars, the most eloquent of American forensic orators, say — though, indeed, in that playful tone which so often left you in doubt whether his words were to be taken in earnest or in jest — that he thought the burning of the Alexandrian library a most fortunate event for the interests of letters. Modern originality, he contended, would otherwise have been smothered, modern independence of thought overawed, and modern elasticity of intellect crushed down, by

the luxuriant abundance, and authority, and weight of ancient literature.

Genius cannot thrive under too dense a shade. It requires room for its expansion, and air and sunlight for its nourishment. It is the solitary pasture-oak, not the sapling from the sheltered and crowded forest, that has made that tree a symbol of healthful vigour, and permanence, and strength. When the language and the literature of Athens had become so familiar at Rome that every Latin author wrote under the influence of Grecian models, and every work of the imagination was tried by the canons of Greek criticism, when the republic and the empire had plundered Hellas, and Sicily, and Asia Minor of their artistic wealth, and the capital counted as many statues as citizens, then native literature declined, and formative art — which, indeed, at Rome had never fairly risen above the imitative stage — became debased, and neither revived until, in the storms of the Middle Ages, so many of those precious achievements of Grecian intellect and fancy had perished, that only enough were left to serve as incitements by their excellence, not enough to discourage further effort by a variety which had anticipated every conception of the creative imagination. The life and literature of a people may be inspirited, stimulated, modified, but not habitually sustained and nourished, by exotic food or the dried fruits of remote ages. Fresh nutriment must enter largely into the daily supply, and the intellect and heart of every nation must be stirred by living sympathies with the special good and evil of its own land and time, as well as with the permanent interests of universal humanity.

Hence the destruction of so many of the works of Anglo-Saxon, Anglo-Norman, and early English writers is a loss, not to literature, but only to what is of less importance, the history of literature; and we may find, in the direct benefits resulting from the events which occasioned much of that destruction, sufficient consolation for the partial evils they caused. To that fierce Reformation which levelled the monasteries with the

ground and scattered or annihilated their literary accumulations, but sowed living seed wherever it plucked up dry stubble, we owe Spenser, and Hooker, and Bacon, and Shakespeare, and Milton, not one of whom had been possible but for the fresh north-wind, which, by sweeping away the swarm of old opinions, old facts, old thoughts, that hung like a darkening cloud over Europe, opened once more the blue sky, and the sun and stars of heaven to the vision of men.

But though no inconsiderable share of the fruits of Saxon and of early English genius has perished, we have reason to think that most of their products which possessed intrinsic worth, or were of practical value to their own time, have come down to us in a more or less complete state; for we do not find mention of many lost authors in terms which give reason to suppose that they were of special interest or importance. There is, however, evidence that certain branches of popular literature, in their rudimentary stages (if indeed that can be called literature which was perhaps never reduced to writing), are imperfectly represented by their existing remains. I refer especially to the unhistorical, traditional, or legendary narratives, which, whether song or saga, verse or prose, appear to have constituted, from the earliest times, a favourite amusement, and, indeed, almost the only refined enjoyment, of the secular orders among our remote progenitors. These were probably, in general, only orally transmitted from age to age, and we do not know enough of their character to be able to determine in what degree of relationship they stand to the national folk-lore of later ages. Several of the yet extant minor poems of the Anglo-Saxons possess much excellence; and the lays which Alfred condescended to learn and sing could not have been absolutely without merit. I do not know that any Anglo-Saxon songs have been preserved which bear much resemblance to the English ballad, nor could this branch of poetical composition have originated in long poems like Beowulf, or the story of Brut, or the later romance of Alexander; for the ballad properly turns on biogra-

phical incidents, not mythical or historical events, and is therefore radically different from these works, both in conception and in form. There are popular poems belonging to the youth, not the infancy, of English literature, which stand out so prominently from the lighter poetry of their time, and seem so completely to have anticipated the tone of later centuries, that we know not how to account for their appearance. The antiquity of these is certain; and we cannot but suspect that they are fragmentary remains of a body of certainly not Saxon, but early English poetry, of which most of the known ballad, and other popular literature of England, would give us no idea. Perhaps the most remarkable of them are the well-known anacreontic, called by Warton 'a drinking-ballad,' though not technically a ballad, first printed in Gammer Gurton's Needle, in 1575 — but of which there are manuscript copies much older in date — and the poetical dialogue, The Nut-brown Maid, which first appeared in that strange medley, Arnold's Chronicle, printed in 1521. Were these compositions now to be judged upon internal evidence, and by comparison with other English poetry of their time and class, they would be unhesitatingly pronounced clever literary impostures, of a much later date; but their genuineness is not open to question.

Although much of Saxon as well as of old English prose and verse has perished, there still remains enough of the latter, if not to enable us to form a complete estimate of the intellectual products, popular and scholastic, of the transition period, yet at least to disclose the primitive form of nearly every branch of English literature which has flourished in later ages.

In discussing the subject before us, I shall endeavour to draw the attention of my hearers rather to the literary adaptations and capacities of the English language than to the peculiarities of its grammar. I adopt this method partly because the minutiæ of inflectional and syntactical structure cannot, without much difficulty, be made clearly intelligible to the ear; partly because, in the want of accessible material for study and com-

parison, there are many important questions of grammatical history upon which it is not yet possible to arrive at definite conclusions; and the mere suggestion of conjectural theories, unsupported by probable evidence, would tend only to mislead and embarrass.

The Romance languages are much more homogeneous in construction than the English; they are all derived, by more or less direct processes, from one and the same ancient tongue, or, rather, group of nearly related dialects, and they so far conform, in their grammatical structure, to the Latin, the common representative of them all, and to each other, that the means of illustrating their forms by comparison and analogy are very abundant. If there be a hiatus in the table of descent in one of these languages, it may generally be supplied from the genealogy of another, and hence there are comparatively few points in their etymology, or in their early history, which are either wholly unexplained, or which stand as anomalous, unrelated philological facts.* Another circumstance has contributed to save their grammar from much of the confusion and obscurity in which, as we shall see, the inflectional and syntactical system of early English is involved. The Latin was the only Italic dialect known to the Middle Ages which possessed an alphabetic system; and the new popular speeches, when first reduced to writing, naturally conformed in their leading features to the orthography of that language, which still remained a living tongue among the clergy of the one only organised branch of the visible Church in Western Europe — one might almost add, among the common people of Italy — and furnished at once a model and a standard of comparison for the expression of vocal sounds by written characters in all the Romance family.† Hence,

* See Illustration IV. at the end of this lecture.

† The student will find in Fauriel, 'Dante, et les origines de la Langue et de la Littérature Italiennes,' much interesting information on the extensive use of the Latin language in Italy in the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries. Not only was popular preaching in Latin common in that country in the last-mentioned century, but Dante was expounded to the people in that language.

although manuscripts of the Middle Ages in those dialects are sufficiently discrepant in their orthography to create occasional embarrassment, yet, in the notation of the inflectional syllables in any one of them, there is not the same wide range of variation as in early English, where, from the want of a general authoritative standard, orthography fluctuated, following now Gothic and now Romance precedent, with an uncertainty which conspired with great irregularity in the use of the inflections themselves, to produce an irreconcilable diversity. For these reasons it has been found practicable to construct, for the successive periods in the philological history of the different Romance dialects, accidences and rules of concord and regimen, which probably approach almost as nearly to accuracy as the dialects themselves approached to uniformity in use. But with all these advantages, the precise knowledge of the primitive grammar of the Romance languages has advanced slowly, and it is scarcely a generation since Raynouard discovered even so simple a thing as the difference between the plural and singular form of the noun in the dialect of Northern France.

For a variety of reasons, both the facilities and the inducements for the study of early English grammar have been fewer and less effectual than for corresponding researches in France and other Continental countries; and when we take into account also the greater inherent difficulties of the subject, it is not surprising that thus far there is not a general agreement of scholars on many cardinal points of early English inflection, and indeed that no thorough, systematic and comprehensive attempt at the investigation of these questions has yet been made.* The serious study of English has but just begun, and it is not a

* I ought here to draw the attention of the reader to the remarkable 'Wissenschaftliche Grammatik der Englischen Sprache' of Fiedler and the valuable continuation of it by Sachs, neither of which became known to me until after this volume was ready for the press. They are, however, unsatisfactory, not so much from want of philological acumen, as because they are founded on a too limited range of early authorities, and because they do not trace, with sufficient distinctness, the historical development of the language.

generation since sound linguistic philosophy was first brought to bear actively and effectively upon it. The method of this study Anglican scholars have learned from German teachers, and, from the natural inclination of the pupil to tread in the steps of his master, there is a strong tendency now, while the facts of English philological history are yet but imperfectly known, to place the theory of English grammar on the same advanced footing as that of the German, the early stages of which have been far more thoroughly investigated.

The great mass of scholars otherwise competent to enter on such speculations have at present the means of using but a part of the material which is absolutely indispensable to the establishment of general conclusions. Manuscripts are accessible to comparatively few, and accurately printed editions of old authors are not yet numerous enough to furnish the necessary data. We have admirable editions of Layamon and the Ormulum, as well as of some less conspicuous literary monuments not widely distant in date from those works. We possess the Wycliffite versions, also, in an extremely satisfactory form, but very few other English authors of the fourteenth century exist in editions which at all meet the demands of critical scholarship. Chaucer is, both for literary and for grammatical purposes, the most important source of information respecting the vigorous youth of the English tongue, but — with the possible exception of Wright's Canterbury Tales, founded almost entirely on a single manuscript — we have, so far as I am aware, no edition of any of the works of that great author which is worthy of confidence as an exhibition of the grammatical system, I will not say of Chaucer himself, but even of any one of the scribes who have copied his writings. No competent scholar has yet subjected the manuscripts of Chaucer to a critical examination and comparison; and hence we cannot pretend to pronounce with certainty upon what is a very important, and would seem beforehand a very obvious matter, the precise extent, namely, to

which, in that author's works, the syntactical relations of words are determined by inflection.*

Only a single English work of the thirteenth century has been brought within our reach in such a form as to authorise us to speak positively upon the syntactical system which the author followed. This is the Ormulum, of which, fortunately, but a single manuscript, apparently the original itself, is known. But the value of this otherwise most important philological monument is much diminished by the uncertainty of its date and of the locality of its dialect, and by the fact that there does not exist, at least in print, enough literary material of its own probable period to serve as a test by which its conformity to the general contemporary usage of the language can be tried, or to which it can itself be applied as a standard of comparison.

But in all inquiries into the grammatical history of early English, it must be borne in mind that such was the dialectic confusion, and such the irregularity of orthography, that we are not warranted in affirming of scarcely any one form, or any one spelling, that it was normal for its time. It is as true of orthography and grammar as of literary form, that there is no unity until great authors arise and become generally recognised as authoritative standards. The founders of a national literature, therefore, conform not to previously settled and acknowledged canons of national speech, for none such exist, but to some particular dialect, or they perhaps frame a more or less eclectic diction, and by their authority establish a grammar, first for

* I think no man who has made Chaucer a study can doubt that he had an orthographical, a grammatical, and a prosodical system, though we have not yet succeeded in finding the key to them. Besides the very strong internal evidence of his works, we have, in his address to Adam, scrivener, and in Troilus and Creseide, Book V. v. 1804—7, direct testimony to a solicitude for the careful copying of his manuscripts, which proves that he by no means wrote at random.

What is wanted is not a *made-up* text of Chaucer, conjectural or eclectic, but a literal reproduction of one or more of the best manuscripts, with various readings from all the others which have any pretensions to authority,— in short, an edition conducted on the same principles as the noble Wycliffite versions by Forshall and Madden.

their literary followers, and, after some time, for the nation. No full and comprehensive general work on English dialectology, ancient or modern, has yet appeared. Very confident opinions, indeed, are pronounced with respect to early English dialects and their relation to modern local patois, but certainly very many of these find no sufficient support in the printed evidence on the subject; and if we are yet authorised to draw any conclusion, it is that the diversities were too numerous to admit of being grouped or classified at all, with any precision of chronological or geographical limitation.

German must be considered to have been a written language, and to have possessed a literature much earlier than our composite English. The Nibelungen-Lied in its recorded form is placed at about the year 1200, and there were numerous written compositions between that period and the year 1300, in different German dialects, and of a character likely to be, and which we know actually to have been, widely circulated. Now the tendency of a popular written literature is to harmonise the discordances of language, and we have sufficient evidence that, for many centuries, the dialects have been dying out, and that German has been both spoken and written with constantly increasing uniformity; and yet, in spite of all this, we find in Firmenich's collection examples of some hundreds of Germanic dialects alleged to be actually spoken at the present day, and Stalder has given us the parable of the Prodigal Son in forty-two German and twenty-seven Romance patois employed in Switzerland alone. In all this, no doubt, there is an enormous exaggeration, which has been produced by giving a phonographic spelling of the colloquial pronunciation of words really the same almost everywhere, and differenced in form only as any two speakers would vary in uttering, and any two listeners in phonographically recording them. There are shades of difference in the articulation of almost any two members of the same family, brother and sister, husband and wife, for example, and two persons often differently hear, and would differently express

in alphabetical characters, the pronunciation of the same individual. If a half-hour's conversation in one of the most cultivated circles in England or America were to be written down by two observers, from the ear, and without regard to the conventional orthography of the words employed, we should have, not simply a dialect which to the eye would vary widely from that of books, but the two reporters would give us two dialects varying almost as much from each other as either from the standard orthography; besides which, each of the speakers would appear to have his own subordinate patois. Hence, most of this alleged diversity of dialect is imaginary, subjective in the listener, or accidental in the speaker, and the well-trained ear of a single person would find no such extent of constant difference as the printed collections would lead us to suppose.

Until, however, the smaller states and communities of mediæval Europe were absorbed into the larger political organizations, and until national literatures had been created, and a greater fixity and universality given to linguistic forms by the invention of printing, the real local differences of speech were constantly augmenting, but in more recent periods, the written and printed page, the frequent reference to acknowledged standards of grammar and orthography, have served as a constant corrective, which, in England as well as on the Continent, is always bringing all deviations back to the normal form.* In the thirteenth, and until near the close of the fourteenth centuries, the people of England had no such standards, and the actual diversities of dialect, though perhaps less numerous and important than the orthographical differences between the manuscripts would seem to indicate, were nevertheless probably greater than they are in any European nation, of equal numbers, at the present day.

From all this it will be evident that whatever may be the value of a precise historical knowledge of primitive English grammar and literature in all their manifestations, such know-

* See First Series, Lecture XXI., p. 453 and following pages.

ledge is not attainable at this time, and with such means as are accessible to American, and, generally, English scholars; and an attempt to present to you anything more than an approximate estimate of their peculiarities would be but a piece of charlatanism, alike discreditable to the speaker and unprofitable to the audience.

But there is a further difficulty. The Anglo-Saxon and the Norman-French, from the union of which the English is chiefly derived, were inflected languages, and had the syntactical peculiarities common to most grammars with inflections; but in the friction between the two, the variable and more loosely attached growths of both were rubbed off, and the speech of England, in becoming stamped as distinctively English, dropped so many native, and supplied their place with so few borrowed, verbal and nominal endings, that it ceased to belong to the inflected class of tongues, and adopted a grammar, founded in a considerable degree upon principles which characterise that of neither of the parent stocks from which it is derived. It is altogether a new philological individual, distinct in linguistic character from all other European speeches, and not theoretically to be assimilated to them.

But the difference between English and the Continental languages does not consist in the greater or less amount of inflection alone. The Danish, with the remarkable exceptions of the passive verb and the coalescent definite form of the noun, is almost as simple as English in this respect, but it is descended from an inflected tongue, with little mixture except from the German, which belongs also to the Gothic stock, and has most of the same syntactical peculiarities as the Old-Northern, a local dialect of which is the more immediate parent of the Danish. Danish, then, is the product of two cognate languages, minus a certain number of inflections, not, indeed, strictly common to both, but represented in both. But English stands in no such relation to its Gothic and Romance sources. The Danish is an intimate mixture of substances much alike in

their elementary character, and it is often impossible to say from which of its two constituents particular linguistic features have been derived. English is a patchwork of two, or rather, three tissues, dissimilar in material as well as in form, and to a distant observer has a prevailing hue very different from that of either of them, though, upon a nearer approach, the special colour and texture of each web is discernible.*

The general and obvious distinction between the grammar of the English and that of the Continental tongues is, that whereas in the latter the relations of words are determined by their form, or by a traditional structure of period handed down from a more strictly inflectional phase of those languages, in English, on the other hand, those relations do not indicate, but are deduced from, the logical categories of the words which compose the period, and hence they must be demonstrated by a very different process from that which is appropriate for syntaxes depending on other principles.† A truly philosophical system of English syntax cannot, then, be built up by means of the Latin scaffolding, which has served for the construction of all the Continental theories of grammar, and with which alone the literary public is familiar, but must be conceived and executed on a wholly new and original plan.

The Continental method of grammatical demonstration is unsuited to the philosophy of the English speech, because it subordinates syntax to inflection, the logical to the formal. We may regard syntax, the analysis of the period or the synthesis of its elements, in two different aspects: as an assemblage of rules for determining the agreement and government of words by correspondence of form, or as a theory of the structure of sentences founded upon the logical relations of words, without special consideration of their forms. The first, or more material and mechanical view belongs especially to highly inflected languages, as to the Latin, for example, and in a less degree to the German; the latter,

* See, on French and Latin constructions in English, Lecture II.

† See First Series, Lecture XVI., p. 347.

or more intellectual, to those whose words are invariable, or nearly so, as the English. English grammar is not to be taught by tables of paradigms and rules of concord and regimen, and we must either, as we do with young children, treat syntax as a collection of arbitrary models for the arrangement of words in periods, which are to be learned by rote, and followed afterwards as unreflectingly as the processes of a handicraft, or we must consider the construction of the sentence a logical problem, to be solved by an almost purely intellectual calculus, and with very few of the mechanical facilities which simplify, if they do not lighten, grammatical study in most other tongues.

The French presents the curious phenomenon of a language inflected in its written forms, but for the most part uninflected in actual speech, and hence its syntax is mixed; but still the word has been mightier than the letter, in so far that it has imposed upon even the written dialect a structure of period in some degree approximating to that of languages whose words are unchangeable in form.* But grammarians think in the language of books, and all oral departures from that dialect are, with them, anomalies or corruptions not entitled to a place in a philosophical view of speech.

Hence there exists no grammar of spoken French, and the theorists of that nation persist in regarding what are really

* This distinction between oral and written French is important to be kept in mind in all inquiries into the influence of Norman-French on English syntax. There is indeed much uncertainty as to the pronunciation of Norman-French at and for some centuries after the Conquest, but various circumstances render it probable that there was, at that period, almost as great a discrepancy between the language of books and that of the market, in all the dialects of Northern France, as there is at the present day. Written French had its special influence on English; but the spoken tongue of the Norman immigrants was undoubtedly a much more important agent in modifying the language of England. See First Series, Lecture XXI., and the works of Palsgrave and Génin there referred to. It must be remembered that Anglo-Saxon also had not only its local dialects, but its general colloquial forms, which, in all probability, differed very widely from the written tongue. Anglo-Saxon English is derived not wholly from the Anglo-Saxon of books, which alone is known to us, but in a great measure, no doubt, from a spoken tongue that has now utterly perished, except so far as it has lived on, first in the mouths and then in the literature, of the modern English people.

syntactical differences between their two dialects as mere questions of pronunciation. The French of the grammarians is an inflected, and properly a dead language *, the German inflected but living, and the signification of the period is controlled by the inflections in both. It is natural, therefore, that the philologists of those nations should, in their grammatical inquiries, be specially attracted by the variable portion, the inflectional characteristics of words, and should less regard the logical relations which may, and in English do exist almost independently of form. However learned Continental scholars may be in the literature, the concrete philology of tongues foreign to their own, they have, in their grammatical speculations on those tongues, until recently, rather neglected syntax, except so far as it necessarily connects itself with correspondence of endings.†

The ultimate objects of the present course are philological, not linguistic. I shall therefore make the presentation of grammatical facts and theories always subordinate to the elucidation of the literary products and capacities of the English speech, and, so far as the grammar is concerned, I shall attempt little beyond a general view of the processes — loss and gain of inflections, and changes in the arrangement of words — by which the Anglo-Saxon syntactical period has been converted into an English one.

I have already urged what seem to me sufficient reasons for adopting this method, but were these grounds wanting, I should

* The theoretical supremacy of the alphabetical, written, over the oral tongue of France is remarkably exemplified in the laws of verse, for coupled endings in French poetry must, in general, rhyme to the eye as well as the ear. Thus, for example, the feminine possessive pronoun, or its homonym the first and third person singular present subjunctive, tienne, cannot be rhymed with the plural verb viennent, nor is mien a good rhyme to liens, though the consonance in both cases is unimpeachable.

† Burguy's grammar of the Langue d'Oil, though exceedingly full upon the forms of individual words, is altogether silent upon syntax, except in the mere matter of concord. Rask's numerous grammars pursue much the same method, but Diez, Grammatik der Romanischen Sprachen, and other late German philologists, are much more complete on this point.

find others not less satisfactory in the opinion I entertain that the study of language is, in this country at least, taking too generally a wrong direction.

What is properly called philology, that is, the study of languages in connection with, and as a means to the knowledge of the literature, the history, the whole moral and intellectual action of different peoples, is much neglected by American scholars, and a professedly profound, but really most superficial research into linguistic analogies and ethnological relations is substituted instead. The modern science of linguistics, or comparative grammar and etymology, requires for its successful pursuit a command of facilities, and above all a previous discipline, which, in the United States, is within the reach of but a small proportion of men disposed to literary occupations, and hence for the present it must be the vocation of a few, not a part of the general education of the many. American scholars seldom possess the elementary grammatical training which is the first requisite to success in the study I am speaking of, and it is a very gross and a very prevalent error to suppose that this training can be acquired by the perusal of theoretical treatises, or, in other words, that it is possible to become a linguist without first being a philologist. The best, indeed the only means we at present possess of imbuing ourselves with the necessary preparatory attainment is, a thorough mastery both of the forms and of the practical synthesis of the words which compose the languages of Greece and Rome, and are organically combined in their literatures. This attainment at once involves a discipline fitting us for linguistic investigation, and provides us with a standard of comparison by which to measure and test the peculiarities of other tongues. Now, though forms may be taught by tables of stems and endings, yet combinations cannot, and the mastery we speak of is not to be attained by conning grammars and consulting dictionaries. It must be the product of two factors, a rote-knowledge of paradigms and definitions, and a long and familiar converse with the intellect of classic antiquity as it still lives and

moves in the extant literary remains of Greece and Rome. We must know words not as abstract grammatical and logical quantities, but as animated and social beings. Roots, inflections, word-book definitions, are products of the decomposition of speech, not speech itself. They are dead remains, stripped of their native attachments and functions, and hence it is that a living Danish scholar, himself a man of rare philological attainment and of keen linguistic perceptions, calls scholastic grammar 'the grave of language.'* Had the founder of comparative anatomy contented himself with the examination of the osseous remains of dead animals alone, his science would have died, and deserved to die, with him; but it was his knowledge of particular skeletons as the framework of living organisms that enabled him to divine and reconstruct the muscles, and veins, and fleshy tissues, and integuments that once made the bones of Montmartre breathing and moving beings. Individually, words have no inherent force, inflected forms no significance, and they become organic and expressive only when they are united in certain combinations, according to their special affinities, and inspired with life by the breath of man. The study of forms and of the primary or abstract meaning of words must go hand in hand with wide observation of those forms and of the plastic modification and development of the signification of words, as exemplified in the living movement of actual speech or literature, and no amount of grammatical and lexical knowledge is a substitute for the fruits of such observation. A scholar might know by rote every paradigm and every syntactical rule in the completest Greek grammars, every definition in the most voluminous Greek lexicons, and yet fairly be said to have no knowledge of the Greek language at all. In short, a student of Greek, possessed of these elements only, is just in the position of an arithmetical pupil who has learned the forms, names, and abstract values of the Arabic numerals and the theory of the decimal notation; that is, he is barely prepared to begin the real

* N. F. S. Grundtvig, Verdens Historie, I. iv.

study of his subject. Inherently, his attainments are worth nothing, and it is only by practical familiarity with numerical combinations that they acquire real significance.*

The want of a thorough knowledge of language as a vehicle of literature and of actual speech is painfully manifested in much of the philological, and especially etymological, discussion of our time and country. We have bold ethnological theories founded on alleged linguistic affinities, comprehensive speculations on the inherent significance of radical combinations, and confident phonological systems, propounded by writers who are unable to construe a page, or properly articulate the shortest phrase in any language but their own.† Nor is this theoretical dreaming by any means confined to the scholarship of the United States. A rage for causative speculation is characteristic of the philosophy of the day. Vast as is the accumulation of facts in every branch of human knowledge, the multiplication of theories has been still more rapid, and even in Germany, where the unflagging industry of Teutonic research is heaping up such immense stores of real knowledge, the imaginative and the constructive faculties are yet more active than the acquisitive. A German inquirer, indeed, does not pause until he has amassed all the known facts belonging to or bearing upon his subject, but the want of sufficient data, where the necessary elements are not all attainable, rarely deters him from advancing a theory. However inadequate his observations may prove to warrant final conclusions, he seldom fails to give the rationale of the recorded phenomena, and if he can obtain but one linguistic fact, he turns that one

* See Illustration V. at the end of this lecture.

† It would indeed be absurd to insist that a linguist can never be competent to compare the structure of languages whose literature he has not mastered, but he can become so only by an intimate knowledge of not the grammar alone, but the living philology of several tongues possessing fully developed inflectional systems. It is only by means of an acquaintance with multifarious literatures in combination with the anatomy of their vehicles, that scholars are able to rise to those philosophical and comprehensive views of the essential character of language and the relations of languages which distinguish the writings of Max Müller and some other linguists of the Continental schools.

into a law, or, in other words, generalises it, with scarcely less confidence than he sums up the results of a million.

Comparative philology is in its infancy,—a strong and vigorous infancy indeed, but still, in its tendencies and habits, too precocious. It is the youngest of the sciences. Modern inquirers have collected a very great number of apparently isolated philological facts, they have detected multitudes of seeming, as well as numerous well-established linguistic analogies, and they have found harmony and resemblance where, until lately, nothing had been discovered but confusion and diversity. But still here, as everywhere else, speculation is much in advance of knowledge, and many of the hypotheses which are sprouting like mushrooms to-day, are destined, like mushrooms, to pass away to-morrow.

The too exclusive contemplation of isolated forms has led to the adoption of many linguistic theories which, I am persuaded, will not stand the test of investigation, conducted with wider knowledge and with more comprehensive lights, drawn, not from comparison of paradigms alone, but from the whole field of social and literary history. It is maintained, for instance, by a class of linguists who insist on explaining changes in language, not by facts within the reach of actual observation, but by assumed inherent laws of speech, that the stage of development when languages form inflections belongs wholly to the ante-historical, I might almost say, the fossil ages; and it is confidently asserted that no new inflections now are, or, within the period through which we can trace the history of language by its monuments, ever have been, constructed in any human tongue. Yet every Romance, and some of the Gothic dialects, present not one only, but several demonstrable, recent instances of the formation of new coalescent inflections, precisely analogous in force to those of ancient languages.*

* See First Series, Lectures XV. and XVI. The historical evidences of a tendency to the formation of new coalescent inflections in the European languages in the Middle Ages are, I believe, more numerous in the Dutch literature of the thir

In like manner, the general reception of the well-established theory of a relationship between most European languages, and their common, or rather parallel, descent from an Oriental source or sources, has given birth to very hasty conclusions with regard to the actual biography of individual vocables. Etymologists incline to neglect the historical method of deduction in their inquiries, and to refer Gothic and Romance words directly to any Sanscrit, Celtic, or Sclavonic root which happens to resemble them, instead of tracing, in literature and in speech, the true route by which, and the source from which, they have migrated into our mother-tongue.* The former is the least laborious and the most ambitious method. It is easier, by the

teenth and fourteenth centuries than in any other. The student will find lists of such coalescences, some of which are very curious and instructive, in the notes to Floris ende Blancefloer, in Hoffmann von Fallersleben's Horæ Belgicæ, Part III.; to Caerl ende Elegast, same collection, Part IV.; to Ferrgunt, published by Visscher, and to the Leven van Sinte Christina, edited by Bormans, &c. The inclination of children to conform the conjugation of the English verb, in all cases, to what is called the weak (better, the regular) method of inflection is familiar to every observing person. There was a similar tendency in the early stages of some of the modern Italian dialects. Biondelli, 'Poesie Lombarde Inedite,' p. 108, note, observes: 'Voliò per volle, ci è nuova prova dello sforzo col quale ai tempi del Bescapè si evitavano tutte le irregolarità nella formazione dei tempi passati e dei partecipj. Possiamo asserire, che le regole grammaticali a ciò destinate erano senza eccezione.' These departures from precedent are not, indeed, strictly new inflections, but they are instances of the operation of a principle which might lead to new inflections. It is to the same cause that we are to ascribe the completion of the conjugation of the defective Latin verbs in modern Italian. The associate verb, Esse, sum, fui, I believe, never became regular; but andare, now associate, was originally regularly conjugated in Italian, as its compounds riandare, &c., are still. Andare is indeed not classical Latin, but it belongs to an early period of Romance etymology.

* To scholars of any pretensions to sound linguistic learning, this train of remark is certainly superfluous; but when we find, in a dictionary which popular favour has carried through seven editions, such astonishing absurdities as the Portuguese etymologies of Constancio, and in the most widely circulated of English dictionaries such speculations as those of Webster on the words alleged to be cognate with the Hebrew barak, it is evident that there is a large class of book-buyers and book-makers who need to be enlightened in regard to the true principles of etymological research. See Webster's Dictionary, Introduction, p. xxxvi., and etymology of *preach*, s. v., which, as well as the cognate words of the same meaning in other European languages, is simply the Latin prædico, but is referred by Webster to the Hebrew barak.

help of the alphabetic arrangement of vocabularies, to turn over a dozen dictionaries, and gather around a given English word a group of foreign roots which contain more or fewer of the same vocal elements, and exhibit a greater or less analogy of meaning, than to seek the actual history of the word by painful research into the records of travel, and commerce, and political combination, and religious propagandism, and immigration, and conquest, which are the ordinary means of the dissemination of words; but the result obtained by this tedious and unostentatious method are of far greater value, and far deeper philosophical interest, than theories which, by reversing the process, found ethnological descent, and build the whole fabric of a national history, extending through ten centuries, on the Roman orthography of a single proper name belonging to a tongue wholly unknown to the Romans themselves.

In fact, undeniable as are many of the unexpected results of modern linguistic research, the mass of speculative inquirers are, under different circumstances, going beyond the extravagance of the etymologists of the seventeenth century. Of dead or remote languages these latter knew only Greek, Latin, Hebrew, and Arabic, and they made no scruple to derive any modern word directly from any root, in any of these tongues, which in the least resembles it in form and signification, without at all troubling themselves about the historical probabilities of the case. Modern philologists have added to the attainments of their predecessors a knowledge of the vocabularies of the Sanscrit, and Celtic, and Sclavonic, not to speak of numerous other dialects; and not only are the root-cellars of all these considered as lawful plunder, whenever a radical is wanted, but, in the lack of historical evidence to show a connection between nations widely separated by space or time, the coincidence of a few words or syllables is held to be sufficient proof of blood-relationship. Hence etymology has become not an aid in historical investigation, but a substitute for it. A shelf of dictionaries is certainly a more cheaply wrought, and is thought a richer mine

of ethnological truth, than a library of chronicles or a magazine of archives; and the most positive testimony of ancient annalists is overruled upon evidence derived from the comparison of a few words, the very existence of which, in the forms ascribed to them, is often a matter of much uncertainty.*

The conjectural speculations of the present day on the general tendencies and fundamental laws of language are even more doubtful than the historical deductions from supposed philological facts. We cannot, indeed, assume to place arbitrary limits to the advance of any branch of human knowledge, and there is no one philological truth which we are authorised to say must for ever remain an ultimate fact, incapable of further resolution or explanation, but there are many phenomena in speech which, in the present state of linguistic science, must be treated as ultimate. With respect to these, it is wise to forbear attempts to guess out their hidden meaning and analogies until we shall discover related facts, by comparison with which we may at length be able safely to generalise.

But in all the uncertainty and imperfection of our knowledge on the subject of English philology, there still remains enough of positive fact to lead us to safe conclusions on the most prominent phenomena of our great grammatical and lexical revolutions; and in a course which, it may be hoped, will serve to some as an introduction to the earnest study, if not of the inflectional forms, yet of the spirit of early English literature, such a general view must suffice.

* Contzen's Wanderungen der Kelten historisch-kritisch dargelegt, 1861, is a remarkable instance of pure historical investigation. With a courage and industry rare even in Germany, the author, to use his own words, has endeavoured 'an der Hand der Schriftsteller des Alterthums Schritt vor Schritt voranzugehen, und den das Auge einladenden Weg der Etymologien möglichst zu vermeiden, und hat überhaupt den aus der Sprache geschöpften Belegen nie die erste Stelle eingeräumt, obwohl er die hohe Bedeutung derselben, zumal da wo die Alten schweigen, nirgends verkannt hat.' In researches so conducted, etymology may safely be called in as a critical help in estimating the weight of testimony and in determining questions upon which the historical proofs are conflicting or suspicious; but it is a hysteron-proteron to subordinate the positive evidence of credible witnesses to linguistic deduction.

Among the many ends which we may propose to ourselves in the study of language, there is but one which is common and necessary to every man. I mean such a facility in comprehending, and such a skill in using, his mother-tongue, that he can play well his part in the never-ceasing dialogue which, whether between the living and the living or the living and the dead, whether breathed from the lips or figured with the pen, takes up so large a part of the life of every one of us. For this purpose, the information I shall strive to communicate will be, certainly not in quantity, but in kind, sufficient; and though genius gifted with nice linguistic sense, and rare demonstrative powers, may dispense with such studies as I am advocating and illustrating, I believe they will be found in general the most efficient helps to a complete mastery of the English tongue.

NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

I. (p. 3.)

CHANGES IN ENGLISH.

I AM far from maintaining that the language of England has at any time become a fixed and inflexible thing. In the adult man, physiological processes, not properly constitutional changes, go on for years before decay can fairly be said to have commenced. His organs, indeed, when he passes from youth to manhood, are already fully developed, but, under favourable circumstances, and with proper training, they continue for some time longer to acquire additional strength, power of action and of resistance, flexibility, and, one might almost say, dexterity, in the performance of their appropriate functions. New organic material is absorbed and assimilated, and effete and superfluous particles are thrown off; but in all this there are no revolutions analogous to those by which the nursling becomes a child, the child a man. So in languages employed as the medium of varied literary effort, there is, as subjects of intellectual discourse, practical applications of scientific principle, and new conditions of social and material life multiply, an increasing pliancy and adaptability of speech, a constant appropriation and formation of new vocables, rejection of old and worn-out phrases, and revivification of asphyxiated words, a rhetorical, in short, not a grammatical change, which, to the superficial observer, may give to the language a new aspect, while it yet remains substantially the same.

The chief accessions to the English vocabulary since the time of Shakespeare have been in the departments of industrial art and of mathematical, physical, and linguistic science. They merely compose nomenclatures, as in the case of chemistry, whose new terminology — though it enables us to speak and write of things, the existence and properties of which analysis has but lately revealed to us — has not appreciably affected the structure of the English tongue or the laws of

its movement. In the dialect of imaginative composition, in all pure literature, in fact, our vocabulary remains in the main unchanged, except, indeed, as it has been enriched by the revival of expressive words or forms which had unfortunately been suffered to become obsolete.

II. (p. 7.)

THE PAPACY.

This ascription of divine authority and honours to the Pope is of frequent occurrence both in the Chronicle of Froissart, who was an ecclesiastic, and in the writings of secular Continental authors in the Middle Ages. Indeed, it was so well understood to be a homage acceptable to the Bishops of Rome, that even Moslem monarchs appear to have used it in the complimentary addresses of their letters to the pontiff when they had a favour to ask. During the pontificate of Innocent VIII., a son of Mohammed the Conqueror, the accomplished Prince Djem, or Zizim, as he was often called in Europe, who had fled from Turkey after his father's death to escape the certain doom which impended over the head of the brothers of the reigning Sultan, was inveigled into the power of the Grand Master of the Knights of Rhodes by a safe-conduct, and thrown into prison. The mother and sisters of Djem retired to Cairo, and asked the intercession of Abd-ul-Aziz, 'Soldan of Babilon,' for the release of the captive. Abd-ul-Aziz invoked the intervention of Pope Innocent VIII. in a curious epistle, a translation of which is found in Arnold's Chronicle, reprint of 1811, pp. 159, 160. The letter is addressed: 'Unto the most holyest and fauorablist Prīce in erthe, Vicary and Lieftenant of Cryst, evermore during Lord Innocence the viii., . . . extirpator of synners . . . the stede of God vsing in erthe;' and elsewhere in the letter the pope is styled 'as in a maner a God ī erthe, and the sacred brethe of Cryst.'

The subsequent details of this affair are worth adding, as an illustration of the somewhat unfamiliar history of the times. Djem was surrendered by the Grand Master to Innocent VIII., and kept under surveillance during the life of that pontiff. Innocent was succeeded by a more celebrated 'extirpator of sinners,' Alexander VI., who treated the unfortunate prince with greater rigour, and soon received—perhaps invited—proposals from Sultan Bayezid II. for his assassination, and from Charles VIII. of France (who wished to use him as an instrument in a war with Bayezid) for his purchase. After some higgling about terms, his Holiness accepted the proposals and the money of both

monarchs, and honourably redeemed his pledges by first administering a dose of poison to Djem, and then delivering him over, while yet alive, to the King of France.

Innocent VIII. was so little ashamed of his conduct in the matter, that he caused to be struck, or rather cast, a medal in commemoration of the bargain by which he engaged to act as the jailor of Djem — or perhaps he, to use a phrase of our day, merely accepted as a *fait accompli* the coining of the medal by some devout contemporary. Among the other treasures by which he was bribed to this dishonourable stipulation, Bayezid had sent him a real or fictitious emerald, with the portraits of our Saviour and of St. Paul engraved upon it. This rare medal, which is about three and one-third inches in diameter, and in the specimen before me of gold, very thickly cast on a copper blank, has, upon the obverse, the head of Christ, with the legend 'IHS . XPC . SALVATOR . MVNDI,' or of St. Paul, and upon the reverse is this inscription, in a Latin worthy of the subject:—

PRESENTES . FIGVRE . AD . SIMILITVDINEM . DOMINI . IHESV . SALVATORIS . NOSTRI . ET . APOSTOLI . PAVLI . IN . AMIRALDO . IMPRESSE . PER . MAGNI . THEVCRI . PREDECESSORES . ANTIA . SINGVLARITER . OBSERVATE . MISSE . SVNT . AB . IPSO . MAGNO . THEVCRO . S . D . N . PAPE . INNOCENCIO . OCTAVO . PRO . SINGVLARI . CLENODIO . AD . HVNC . FINEM . VT . SVVM . FRATREM . CAPTIVVM . RETINERET.

It is remarkable that this ascription of divinity to the head of the Romish Church, after having fallen much into disuse, should have been revived in the days of the present pope. The Ultramontanist journals freely employ it; and Bedini, Archbishop of Viterbo and Toscanella, now Cardinal, in a recent pastoral (1861) addressed to his diocesans, not only calls Pius IX. Christ's 'vicar on earth,' but asks the faithful to deposit their tribute of Peter's pence 'at the feet of the persecuted MAN-GOD'—'ai piedi del perseguitato Uom-Dio,'—thus applying to the pope the name by which the fathers of the Church expressed the incarnation of the Divinity in man. Christ was to them the Θε-άνθρωπος or Θέ-ανδρος; to Cardinal Bedini, Pius IX. is the Man-God.

III. (p. 10.)

HISTORICAL LITERATURE OF THE MIDDLE AGES.

In Icelandic, the authors of Njála, Laxdæla-Saga, and the Heimskringla; in French, Ville-Hardouin, Joinville, Froissart, and many other less important chroniclers; in Catalan, Ramon Muntaner and Bernat d'Esclot, are all entitled to a place in the front rank of historical

writers, but no poet of those ages and countries still survives as an actually living influence in literature. Even the Roman de la Rose is but little read, and that rather for linguistic than for literary purposes. The neglect into which this and other poems of this class have fallen, in spite of their abundant beauty of imagery, of thought, and even of expression, is the natural consequence of their deficiency in power of delineating character, and their want of unity of conception in plan and execution. The rhymed chronicles of the Middle Ages are generally wholly destitute of poetical merit, and they are rarely of much value considered simply as annals. They disregard historical truth, but fail to secure the graces of fable by the sacrifice.

These observations, so far as poetry is concerned, do not apply to the literature of Germany. The admirable Teutonic epic, the Nibelungen-Lied, is almost as wonderful a phenomenon as the Iliad itself. The oldest manuscripts of this poem belong to the earlier part of the thirteenth century, and though it is founded on ancient and wide-spread Gothic traditions, it is neither proved nor probable that the rhapsodies of which it is composed existed in a collected, harmonised, and recorded form, at a period long previous to the date of these manuscripts. Considered, then, as a literary monument, the Nibelungen-Lied is contemporaneous with the chronicle of Ville-Hardouin. But Germany has no vernacular historian of that epoch to boast, and in fact it may be said to be generally true of the infant age of every modern literature, with the exception of that of Italy, that it has not produced at the same time great poets and great historians. In point of literary merit, the Icelandic historical school ranks far above any other of the Middle Ages, and it is worth noticing that,—while the ablest chroniclers of the Romance nations confine themselves chiefly to the narration of events occurring under their own observation, or very near their own time, and in which they had often personally participated, or at least, known the principal agents,—very many of the most celebrated Icelandic sagas were composed at dates considerably later than the periods whose history they record. Hence, in early Romance historical literature, the personality of the annalist often makes itself conspicuous, and his narrative has a more subjective character than those of the sagas, the authors of which are for the most part unknown, and not themselves *dramatis personæ*. However spirited and brilliant may be the Romance chronicles in the description of events, they are vastly inferior to the sagas in the portraiture of all that goes to make up the personality of the individual. Few historical narrators have produced more completely full and rounded models of flesh and blood humanity

than Njáll, and Gunnarr, and Hallgerdr, in Njála, and Höskuldr, and Olaf the Peacock, and Kjartan, in Laxdæla.

IV. (p. 15.)

ORIGIN OF THE ROMANCE LANGUAGES.

Until recently, philologists have habitually spoken loosely of the Romance languages as derived from the Latin, and are understood by common readers as meaning thereby the classical speech which served as the vehicle of the literature of ancient Rome. That the structure, and more especially the vocabulary, of the modern Romance tongues have been very greatly affected by the influence of Latin, as the language of Roman literature and of the Romish Church, is indisputably true; but there is abundant evidence to show that, contemporaneously with the written language of ancient Rome, there existed a popular speech, comparatively simple in inflectional, and, of course, syntactical structure, and bearing a considerable resemblance to the modern written and spoken dialects of the Romance nations. This humble tongue is mentioned by many ancient writers under the name of *lingua rustica*, and it and its provincial dialects are considered by most philologists as the true parents of the languages now employed throughout Southern Europe. Although it is usually referred to by a collective name, there can be no question that it was divided into a great number of local dialects, more or less differing from each other and from written Latin, and that the differences between these dialects have been, to some extent at least, perpetuated in the modern languages which have succeeded to and now represent them. It is further possible, perhaps we may even say probable, that there existed between the oral and the recorded dialects of the capital itself, some such relation as that between the written and the spoken French of the present day, and hence, that the language of conversation at Rome differed very considerably from that of literature.

Besides the tendency to division and ramification which all languages show whenever the nations that speak them are themselves divided into fragments separated by physical or political barriers, there was, in ancient Italy, a special cause of confusion of speech, which of itself would account for a great departure of the oral from the written tongue, as well as for the breaking up of the spoken language, had it ever been uniform, into a multitude of dialects. I refer to the exhaustion of the rural population, and the substitution of foreign-born predial slaves and disbanded soldiers, from every part of the ancient known world, for the native and aboriginal inhabitants of the soil. This exhaustion was

produced by the military conscription, by the tendency of population towards great commercial and industrial centres, which has again become so marked a feature of the associate life of Europe, and by the absorption of the lesser estates into the domains of the great proprietors. The place of the conscript, or emigrant native peasant, was taken by servile and discharged military strangers to such an extent, that the Latin and other Italic races were said to have become almost extinct in the rural districts even before the days of the empire. These foreigners were of many different stocks and different tongues, and though the enslaved captives were distributed without much regard to community of origin or of speech, yet the disbanded veterans would naturally be colonised with some reference to their nationality, and hence each considerable allotment of military bounty lands would be a centre which would exercise a peculiar influence upon the language of its own vicinity, and thus tend to create a local patois, if none existed there before.

Raynouard, Lexique Roman, I. xiii., observes: 'Il est reconnu aujourd'hui que la romane rustique se forma de la corruption de la langue latine, que l'ignorance de ceux qui parlaient encore cette langue, à l'époque de l'invasion des hordes du Nord, et leur mélange avec ces hordes, modifièrent d'une manière spéciale, par suite de laquelle le nouvel idiome acquit un caractère distinct d'individualité.'

This theory supposes that the classical Latin was once the general popular speech, not only of Italy, but of Spain, Portugal, and France. This is an assumption, not only without proof, but at variance with probability, and there is no reason to believe that any one vulgar dialect ever had a great territorial range in the Italian peninsula, still less in the distant subjected provinces. We know historically that Italy was originally, or at least, at a very early period, peopled by many different races, which were at last united under the government, and forced into a conformity with the institutions of Rome. But we have no proof that their vernaculars ever melted and harmonised into one uniform *lingua rustica*, and, indeed, the period through which the sway of Rome extended was altogether too short for such an amalgamation to have taken place under such circumstances. The rustic dialects are to be regarded not as corruptions of the Latin, or of any other single speech, but each as in a certain sense the representative of an older and more primitive tongue. Their natural resemblances are results of a tendency to coalesce, imposed upon them by the social and political influence of Rome, not evidence of greater likeness and closer relationship at an earlier stage. The Latin itself is but a compromise and an amalgamation of the linguistic peculiarities of older speeches, and it was probably

never employed as the vulgar tongue of Roman Italy to a greater extent than Tuscan is spoken at this day in the modern Italian States. So far from being the mother of the rustic patois, the Latin itself may with greater truth be regarded as derivative, and as a coalescence of more ancient forms of them. This, indeed, is apparently less true of the grammar than of the vocabulary. The stock of words in Latin is evidently of a very mixed character, but the regularity and completeness of the inflections show that the grammar of some one ancient dialect very greatly predominates in the composite literary tongue of Rome.

On the other hand, it must be admitted, that the general coincidence of vocabulary in the Romance languages, and especially the occurrence of numerous words, substantially the same in all of them, but which can hardly be traced to a classical Latin source — such, for example, as It. acciajo, Sp. acero, Fr. acier; It. aguglia, Sp. aguja, Fr. aiguille; It. arrivare, Sp. arribar, Fr. arriver; It. bianco, Sp. blanco, Fr. blanc; It. bocca, Sp. boca, Fr. bouche; It. cacciare, Sp. cazar, Fr. chasser — seems to point to a community of origin which their grammatical discrepancies tend to disprove. Literary and ecclesiastical influences have been very important agencies in bringing about a uniformity in the stock of words, and as to those vocables common to all the Romance dialects, but unknown to classical Latin, it is not improbable that they belonged to popular nomenclatures connected with the military or civil administration of the Roman government, and which were employed as widely as that government extended, though not forming a part of the literary tongue.—See *On the Divergence of Dialects*, Lecture II.

V. p. (27.)

GRAMMAR AND PHILOLOGY.

A syntax which looks no higher than to rules of concord and regimen, the determination of logical relations by the tallying of endings, is not a whit more intellectual than the game of dominoes. The study of linguistics is valuable, less as an independent pursuit, than as a means of access to a wider range of philologies, understood in that broad sense in which the word is now used in German criticism. Happily for the interests of learning, most distinguished Continental linguists are philologists also. On the other hand, American, and, I must add, English professed linguists, are in general but nibbling the shell while they imagine themselves to be enjoying the kernel of the fruit. I desire not

to be understood as undervaluing the linguistic works of such men as Bopp and the brothers Grimm, whose labours have furnished the key to such vast stores of literary wealth, but at the same time I maintain that the student of language who ends with the linguistics of Bopp and Grimm had better never have begun; for grammar has but a value, not a worth; it is a means, not an end; it teaches but half-truths, and, except as an introduction to literature and that which literature embodies, it is a melancholy heap of leached ashes, marrowless bones, and empty oyster-shells. You may feed the human intellect upon roots, stems, and endings, as you may keep a horse upon saw-dust; but you must add a little literature in the one case, a little meal in the other, and the more the better in both. Many years ago, Brown, an American grammarian, invented what he called a parsing-machine, for teaching grammar. It was a mahogany box, some two feet square, provided with a crank, filled with cog and crown-wheels, pulleys, bands, shafts, gudgeons, couplings, springs, cams, and eccentrics; and with several trap-sticks projecting through slots in the top of it. When played upon by an expert operator, it *functioned*, as the French say, very well, and ran through the syntactical categories as glibly as the footman in Scriblerus did through the predicates. But it had one capital defect, namely, that the pupil must have learned grammar by some simpler method, before he could understand the working of the contrivance, and its lessons, therefore, came rather late. There are many sad 'compounds of printer's ink and brain-dribble,' styled 'English Grammars,' which, as means of instruction, are, upon the whole, inferior to Brown's gimcrack.

LECTURE II.

ORIGIN AND COMPOSITION OF THE ANGLO-SAXON PEOPLE AND THEIR LANGUAGE.

BEFORE proceeding to the immediate subject of the present lecture, I will offer an explanatory remark upon the nomenclature which, in common with many writers on European philology, I employ. I shall make frequent use of the ethnological epithets, Gothic, Teutonic, Germanic, Scandinavian, and Romance. Under the term Gothic I include not only the extinct Mœso-Gothic nation and language, and the contemporaneous kindred tribes and tongues, but all the later peoples, speeches, and dialects commonly known as Anglo-Saxon, German, Dutch, Flemish, Norse, Swedish, Danish, and Icelandic, together with our composite modern English. All these are marked by a strong family likeness, and hence are assumed, though by no means historically proved, to be descended from a common original. With the exception of a few words, chiefly proper names, which occur in the writings of the Greek and Latin historians and geographers, the oldest specimen we possess of any of the Gothic languages is the remnant of a translation of the Scriptures executed by Ulfilas, a bishop of the Mœso-Goths, but himself, according to Philostorgius, of Cappadocian descent, who lived on the shores of the Lower Danube, in the fourth century after Christ.* The Gothic languages divide themselves into —

I. The Teutonic or Germanic branch, which consists of — 1, the Mœso-Gothic; 2, the Anglo-Saxon; 3, the Low-German, or Saxon; 4, the Dutch, or Netherlandish, including the

* See Illustrations II. and V. at the end of this lecture.

Flemish; 5, the Frisic; and 6, the High-German, to which may be added the Cimbric of the Sette and the Tredici Comuni in Italy*, and many Swiss and even Piedmontese patois.

II. The Scandinavian branch, which embraces — 1, the Old-Northern, or Icelandic, improperly called Runic by many earlier English philologists; 2, the Swedish; 3, the Danish, including the Norse, or Norwegian.

III. The English, which, though less than half the words composing its total vocabulary are of Gothic descent, is classed with that family, because in its somewhat mixed grammatical structure the Gothic syntax very greatly predominates, and a majority of the words employed in the ordinary oral intercourse of life, and even in almost any given literary composition, are of Gothic etymology. Perhaps, also, the Scottish should be regarded as a distinct speech, rather than as a mere dialect of English.

All these, excepting the Mœso-Gothic, and presumably that also, have or had a great number of spoken, and many of them even written, more or less divergent dialects. I am aware that the propriety of this application of the terms Gothic, Teutonic, and Germanic is disputed; but it has long been received, and will be better understood than any new phraseology.

Romance formerly meant — and is still defined in most dictionaries — the dialects of the Spanish and Italian borders of France; but, in recent criticism, it is a generic term embracing all the modern languages usually regarded as cognate with the Latin, — in a word, the Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, Catalan, or Lemosin†, Provençal, French, the Roumansch of several Swiss

* See First Series, Lecture VI., p. 140.

† The Catalan or Lemosin is often spoken of as a dialect of Spanish. If by Spanish be meant the assemblage of speeches employed in Spain, the expression may be correct; but if the Castilian, the written language of most parts of Spain, be intended, it is no more true that Catalan is a dialect of Spanish than it is that Spanish is a dialect of Catalan. Neither is a derivative or an offshoot of the other. The development and history of each is independent of that of the other, and the Catalan is, in the important point of the construction of periods, quite as near to the French as to the Castilian.

communities in its various forms, and the Wallachian. These, also, are subdivided into many local dialects, or patois, several of which, especially in Italy, have been reduced to writing, and may not improperly be said to have their special literatures. We cannot affix a chronological date to the epoch of change from the rustic or provincial Roman to the modern Romance in any language of this family; but, with the exception of single phrases in ancient liturgies, laws, and chronicles, the oldest extant monuments in a Romance dialect are generally considered to be the oaths of Louis le Germanique and of certain French lords, subjects of Charles the Bald, sworn at Strasburg in 842.*

Many recent inquirers believe that the Continental invaders, of Gothic origin, who reduced Celtic England to subjection a few centuries after Christ, emigrated from a small district in Sleswick now called Angeln, and were all of one race — the Angles,— that the designation Saxon was not the proper appellation of any of them, but a name ignorantly bestowed upon them by the native Celts, and at last, to some small extent, adopted by themselves. It is hence argued that the proper name of their language is not Saxon, or even Anglo-Saxon, but Angle, or, in the modern form, English. It is farther insisted that the present speech of England is nearly identical with the dialect introduced into the island by the immigrants in question, and consequently, that there is no ground for distinguishing the old and the new by different names, it being sufficient to characterise the successive periods and phases of the Anglican speech by epithets indicative of mere chronological relation, saying, for instance, for Anglo-Saxon, old, or primitive English, — for our present tongue, new, or modern English.

I differ from these theorists as to both premises and conclusion.† By those who maintain such doctrines, it appears to be assumed that if the evidence upon which it has been hitherto

* See Illustration I. at the end of this lecture.

† See First Series, Lecture I., pp. 41—45.

believed that the immigration was composed of three different tribes, — Jutes, or Jutlanders, Angles, and Saxons, — could be overthrown, it would follow that it consisted of Angles alone. This is altogether a *non sequitur;* and it must not be forgotten that the only historical proof which establishes the participation of a tribe called Angles in the invasions of the fifth and sixth centuries at all is precisely the evidence which is adduced to show that Saxons accompanied or followed them. It must be admitted, indeed, that the extant direct testimony upon the whole subject is open to great objections, and that scarcely any of the narrative accounts of the Germanic conquest of England will stand the test of historical criticism. That the new-comers themselves styled portions of the territory they occupied Essex, Sussex, Wessex, and Middlesex,— that is, the districts of the East Saxons, South Saxons, West Saxons, and Middle Saxons,— is undisputed; and it is a violently improbable supposition, that they bestowed on these localities a name mistakenly applied to themselves by the natives, instead of calling them by their own proper and familiar national, or at least tribal, appellation. They also often spoke of themselves, or of portions of themselves, as Saxons, of their language as the Saxon speech, and Alfred's usual royal signature was 'Rex Saxonum,' though, indeed, they more generally called the whole people and the language Angle, or English.

Apart from the testimony of the chroniclers — which modern inquirers seem generally and with good reason much inclined to suspect — the only proof which identifies the Angles of England with any Continental people is the perhaps accidental coincidence between their name and that of a Germanic, or, as some writers maintain, a Scandinavian tribe, occupying a corner of Sleswick so narrow in extent as hardly to be noticed at all in Continental history. It is equally true that there is no external testimony to show that any nation, known to itself as Saxon while yet resident on Teutonic soil, furnished any contingent to the bodies of invaders. Germanic and Scandi-

navian history are silent on the whole subject*, except in some few passages probably borrowed from Anglo-Saxon authorities; and in the want of trustworthy information from native annalists, we must have recourse to the internal evidence supplied by the language, and to the probabilities deduced from such indirect and fragmentary facts as have come down to us, through other channels, from the dark and remote period of emigration.

What then does the character of the language commonly, and, as I think, appropriately, called Anglo-Saxon, when examined in the earliest forms known to us, indicate with respect to the origin of those who spoke it?

According to the present views of the ablest linguists, grammatical structure is a much more essential and permanent characteristic of languages than the vocabulary, and is therefore alone to be considered in tracing their history and determining their ethnological affinities. This theory, I think, is carried too far, when it is insisted that *no* amalgamation of the grammatical characteristics of different speeches is possible; for though languages often receive and assimilate a great amount of foreign material without much change of structure, yet, on the other hand, there are cases of the adoption of more or less of foreign syntax while the vocabulary remains in a good degree the same, and even while the people who employ it continue almost wholly unmixed in blood with other nations. The Armenians, for example, can boast of a purer and more ancient descent than any other Christian people, and they have kept themselves, during the whole period since their conversion to Christianity in the fourth century, almost as distinct in blood and as marked in nationality as the Hebrews. Their language is lineally descended from the old Armenian tongue, its radicals remaining substantially the same, but its grammar is everywhere modified by that of the prevailing idiom of the different countries where, in the wide dispersion of the Armenian people, it is spoken.

* It deserves to be specially noticed that the names of neither Angle nor Saxon occur in Beowulf.

According to our learned countryman, Mr. Riggs, the syntax of the Armenian spoken in Turkey has conformed itself to the structure of the Turkish, and while the ancient Armenian Scriptures correspond with the Hebrew text in the logical construction of periods and the arrangement of the words that compose them, the modern Armenian exactly inverts the order of position, and, in accordance with Turkish syntax, places first all instrumental, local, and circumstantial qualifications, and announces the principal proposition at the end of the sentence. Thus, to use the illustration of Mr. Riggs, a Turco-Armenian, in saying, 'that a Greek shot an Egyptian yesterday with a pistol, in a drunken quarrel, in one of the streets of the city,' instead of arranging the words in the ancient Armenian order, which nearly corresponds with the English, would announce the proposition in this form:—'Yesterday — of this city — of the streets — one — in — of wine — the use — in originating — of a quarrel — in consequence — with a pistol — a Greek — an Egyptian killed.'*

A linguistic inquirer, who adopts the theory I am discussing, might conclude from the study of modern Armenian grammar that the people and the language belonged to the Tartar stock; whereas nothing is more certain than that the Armenians and their speech are ethnologically unrelated to the Ottoman race and the Turkish tongue. If therefore it were true that the grammatical coincidence between Anglo-Saxon and any given Continental dialect were closer than it is, the identity of the two would not thereby alone be conclusively proved. In point of fact, Anglo-Saxon grammar does not precisely correspond to that of any other Gothic speech, but, on the contrary, embraces some characteristics of several Germanic and even Scandinavian dialects.

The Anglo-Saxon, and especially the English language, have been affected in both vocabulary and structure by the influence of all the Gothic and Romance tongues with which they have

* Transactions of the American Oriental Society for 1860.

been brought into long and close contact. Doubtless this influence is most readily perceived and appreciated in the stock of words, but although more obscure and much smaller in actual amount of results, it is, I think, not less unequivocal in its effects upon the syntax.

A comparison of the Anglo-Saxon gospels with older monuments of the language, Beowulf and the poems of Cædmon, for instance, on the one hand, and with the Latin text on the other, appears to me to show very clearly that the syntax of the translation, and, through the influence of that translation, of the general Anglo-Saxon speech, was sensibly affected by the incorporation of Latin constructions previously unknown to it. I cannot here go into this question at length, but I may refer to a single exemplification of this influence in the employment of the active or present participle, in both absolute and dependent phrases, in close accordance with the Latin usage.*

The Anglo-Saxon compared the adjective by change of ending only, or inflection, and not by the adverbs *more* and *most;* the Norman-French, by the help of adverbs. The English employs both methods, the latter almost uniformly in long words. The possessive relation between nouns was expressed in Anglo-Saxon by a regular possessive or genitive *case*, and not by a preposition; in Norman-French, in general, by a preposition only. In English both modes are used. The Anglo-Saxon did not employ a preposition before the infinitive, but had a special verbal form nearly analogous to the Latin gerund, which is by some considered as a dative case of the infinitive; the Norman-French infinitive, in many cases, took a preposition. The English first dropped the characteristic ending of the gerundial, thus reducing it to the infinitive form, and then regularly preceded the infinitive, except when coupled with an auxiliary verb, by a preposition; thus amalgamating, or rather confounding, the offices of the two forms.†

* See Illustration II. at the end of this lecture.
† See Illustration III. at the end of this lecture.

Now these and other analogous cases are instances of the substitution of foreign grammatical combinations for native inflections, or, in other words, of a mixture of grammars *pro tanto.* They are, indeed, not numerous or important enough to affect the general character of English syntax, which is in very large measure derived from that of the Anglo-Saxon; but they are sufficient to prove that the doctrine of the impossibility of *any* grammatical mixture is a too hasty generalisation; and hence the extent of syntactical amalgamation is simply a question of proportion.

The Anglo-Saxon is not grammatically or lexically identifiable with the extant remains of any Continental dialect; but, so far as it is to be considered a homogeneous tongue, it much resembles what is called the Old-Saxon of the Heliand (a religious poem of the ninth century), and the Frisic, both of which belong to the Low-German or Saxon branch of the Teutonic; and hence we are authorised to presume, that the bulk of the invaders emigrated from some territory not remote from the coast of the North Sea, where the population employed a Low-German dialect or dialects. The composite and heterogeneous character of the Anglo-Saxon vocabulary, or, in other words, the internal evidence derived from the language itself, tends to the same conclusions, in respect to the origin of the tongue and the people, to which we should be led by the little we know of the history of maritime Germany and the Netherlands during the period succeeding the Roman occupation of a part of that territory. It is evidently a mixed speech; and we can, in many instances, trace its different ingredients to sources not having much immediate relation to each other.

The martial triumphs and extended despotism of Rome dislodged and expelled from their native seats great numbers, if not whole tribes, of a people who, at that period, were just in the state of semi-civilization which Thucydides describes as that of the early Greeks,— a state which offers no obstacle to emigration, but facilitates it, because it has no permanent and well-

secured homes, no strong local attachments, and at the same time is far enough advanced in pastoral and mechanical art, to be provided with the means of locomotion and of the transportation of such objects as man in that condition of life most highly prizes.

The line of march of the fugitives who retreated before the Roman legions, would be to the north-west; both because the Rhine, the Elbe, and their tributary streams, on which many of them would embark, flow in that direction, and because the difficult nature of the country lying between the outlets of the great northern rivers opposed the most formidable obstacles to the advance of a pursuing force; and, while it offered ample means of subsistence in the abundance of the sea, yet held out few attractions of a character to tempt the cupidity of the Roman robber. Hence, independently of other more or less similar, earlier or contemporaneous, concurrent causes, it is extremely probable that, in consequence of the progress of the Roman arms about the commencement of the Christian era, and during the immediately preceding and succeeding centuries, a multitude of tribes, and fragments of tribes, languages, and fragments of languages, were distributed along the coasts of the German Ocean, and the navigable waters which discharge themselves into it.

The jealousies of family and of class, which are such a conspicuous feature in the character of all rude races, would long prevent the coalescence of distinct bodies of these people, or the fusion of their unwritten dialects; and these, indeed, by the isolation of those who spoke them, would tend to diverge rather than assimilate, until some one group or confederacy of tribes should become strong enough to conquer or absorb the rest. We have no historical evidence whatever, of any political or linguistic unity between the inhabitants of different portions of the coast; and no legitimate deduction from the known habits and tendencies of half-savage life would lead to such conclusion.

At this period, the low lands, subject to overflow by the Ger-

man Ocean and by the great rivers which empty into it, were not diked; but, as appears from Pliny*, the few inhabitants of the tide-washed flats lived in huts erected on artificial mounds, as upon the coast-islands they do at this day. The art of diking seems to have been suggested by the causeways and the military engineering of the Romans. But the labour and expense involved in it were so great, that it made very slow progress; and no considerable extent of this coast was diked in until long after the Saxon conquest of England. Upon the firm land were vast woods and morasses, which prevented free communication between the population, and it was consequently separated into independent bodies, united by no tie of common interest.

Wherever man, in the state of life in which the concurrent testimony of all history places the Northern Germans at the period of which we speak, is accessible to observation, he is found divided into small and hostile clans, distinguished by considerable, and constantly widening, differences of dialect, and incapable of harmonious or extended political or social action. The traditional accounts of the Saxon conquest of England speak of numerous successive and totally distinct bodies of invaders; and the probability that any one tribe, or any one continuous territorial district, even if all its clans were united under one head, could have furnished a sufficient force to subdue the island in any one or any ten successive expeditions, is too slender to be admitted for a moment.

The people who inhabit the coasts of the North Sea have now been Christianised for a thousand years, and brought under the sway of two or three governments. During all these ten centuries, all religious and all political influences have powerfully tended to the extirpation of local differences of speech, and to the reduction of the multiplied patois, if not to one, to two or three leading dialects. Yet, though all known external causes of discrepancy have long since ceased to act, we find that, in spite of the harmonising influences to which I have alluded,

* Nat. Hist. xvi. 1.

every hour of travel, as we advance from the Rhine to the Eider, brings us to a new vernacular. Within the space of three hundred miles, we meet with at least a dozen, mostly unwritten, dialects, not only so discrepant as to be mutually unintelligible to those who speak them, but often marked by lexical and grammatical differences scarcely less wide than those which distinguish any two Gothic or any two Romance tongues.* There is not a shadow of proof, there is no semblance of probability, that the inhabitants of these coasts spoke with more uniformity fourteen centuries ago than to-day, but every presumption is to the contrary.

Jacob Grimm, indeed, observes that all dialects and patois develope themselves progressively, and the further we look back in language, the smaller is their number and the less marked are they.† This is in accordance with all linguistic theory, and if human annals reached far enough back to exhibit to us earlier stages of divergence of speech, the proposition would probably be found historically true; but if we take the different linguistic families of Europe, and follow them up as far as documentary evidence can be traced, the reverse appears, in very many cases, to be the fact. The dialects diverge as we ascend. If we compare any one of the Low-German dialects of the present day

* See Halbertsma's very remarkable account of the confusion and instability of speech in the Frisian provinces of Holland, in Bosworth's Origin of the Germanic and Scandinavian languages, pp. 36–38. See also First Series, Lectures II., p. 43, and XVIII., p. 378. And yet the multitude of dialects was greater within the memory of persons now living than it is at present.

† 'Alle Mundarten und Dialecte entfalten sich vorschreitend, und je weiter man in der Sprache zurückschaut, desto geringer ist ihre Zahl, desto schwächer ausgeprägt sind sie. Ohne diese Annahme würde überhaupt der Ursprung der Dialecte, wie der Vielheit der Sprachen unbegreiflich sein.'

Although the learned author declares that this proposition is 'aus der Geschichte der Sprache geschöpft und in der Natur ihrer Spaltung gegründet,' it must nevertheless be considered rather as a corollary from the doctrine of the descent of the human family from a single stock, than as a statement of historically established fact. The proofs, or rather illustrations, adduced by Grimm amount to very little, and the conclusion is drawn not from evidence, but from assumptions founded on the supposed impossibility of otherwise explaining the origin of dialects and the multiplicity of languages.

with the contemporaneous High German, we shall find a marked difference indeed, which, if the former now had a living literature and were spoken by a people governed by a distinct political organisation, would perhaps be held sufficient to entitle them to be considered as different languages. But between the poem Heliand and the Krist of Otfrid — both of the ninth century and therefore nearly contemporaneous — the former being taken as the representative of the Low, the latter as that of the High German, there is a much more palpable difference than exists at the present day, or at any intermediate period, between the dialects which stand in the place of them. If we extend the comparison so as to embrace the Mœso-Gothic, which Grimm * declares to have become wholly extinct and to have left no surviving posterity, we find a greater diversity still.† Over how large a space either of these three Germanic speeches prevailed, we do not know; nor have we any warrant whatever for affirming, any probable ground for presuming, that there did not exist, by the side of these, numerous other dialects as unlike either of them as they are to each other.

In the case of the Scandinavian languages, the Swedish, Danish, and modern Icelandic, indeed, the facts are said to be different. It is affirmed that, at a period not very remote, a tongue substantially the same as what is now called Icelandic was spoken in Denmark, Norway, and Sweden, and that the present languages of those three countries are lineally descended from the primitive Old-Northern speech.‡ Admitting this to be so, a reason why we are able to trace the Scandinavian dialects historically to a common original might be found in the fact, that the migration of the Scandinavians into their present seats, the multiplication of their numbers, their consequent spread over a wide surface, and their separation and division into dis-

* 'Die gotische ist ganz, ohne dasz etwas neueres an ihre stelle getreten wäre, erloschen.'

† See Illustrations IV. and V. at the end of this lecture.

‡ See Illustration VI. at the end of this lecture.

tinct tribes with divergent speeches — all these events are very much more recent than the occupation of Germany by the ancestors of its present population, and the division of that population, if indeed ever homogeneous, into separate tribes.

The comparatively late date of the Gothic colonisation of Scandinavia is proved by a variety of circumstances which cannot now be detailed, but it is well to refer to one of them — the fact, namely, that the older race whom the Scandinavian Goths expelled from Norway, Sweden, and perhaps Denmark — the Laplanders, or, as the Old-Northern writers call them, the Finns — is not yet extirpated, but still exists as a distinct people, with its original speech; whereas nearly every trace of a more ancient population of Germany has utterly disappeared.

We have no similar evidence with respect to the unity, or even close relationship, of the Germanic peoples and their dialects within any calculable period. It is not proved that any modern High-German or Low-German speech is derived from the Mœso-Gothic of Ulfilas, or from the dialect of Otfrid, or of the Heliand; and it is just as probable that all the Germanic patois are descended from parallel old dialects, the memory of which is lost because their written monuments have perished, if any such ever existed.

If we do not find a similar state of things in the Romance languages, it is because they are all directly derived, not indeed from the classical Latin, but from cognate unwritten dialects which group themselves around the Latin as their common representative and only mouthpiece. Hence their tendencies to a wider divergence were always checked by the influence of a central, written, authoritative, ever-living and immutable speech, no parallel to which, so far as we have any reason to believe, existed in Germany.

As a general rule, then, applicable to what is called the historical period, or that through which written records extend, dialects have usually tended to uniformity and amalgamation as they descend the stream of time; and as we trace them back-

wards, they ramify like rivers and their tributaries, until the main current is lost in a dispersion as distracting as the confusion of Babel.*

From all this it follows that we have no reason to suppose that the conquerors of England were a people of one name or of one speech, but on the contrary there is every probability that they were, though ethnologically and linguistically nearly or remotely allied, yet practically, and as they viewed themselves, composed of fragments of peoples more or less alien to each other in blood and in tongue.

They were Christianized not far from the close of the sixth century, and from this epoch all influences tended to amalgamation and community of speech. We have monuments of the language which date very soon after this period, but, as they are extant only in copies executed in later centuries, we know not their primitive orthography, nor have we any actual knowledge of the forms or grammatical character of the language earlier than the eighth or ninth century, because we possess no manuscripts of greater antiquity.†

Whatever, then, may have been the original discrepancies of the speech, they had been, at our earliest acquaintance with it, in some degree at least, harmonised. Still we cannot say that Anglo-Saxon, even at that period, presents the characteristics of a homogeneous, self-developed tongue. Its inflections, as exhi-

* See Illustration VII. at the end of this lecture.

† The determination of the age of Anglo-Saxon manuscripts from internal evidence is a matter of much difficulty and uncertainty, because there are few such writings of *known* date, by which the antiquity of undated copies can be tested. An expression of Alfred, in the preface to his translation of Boethius, would tend to show that Anglo-Saxon was hardly a commonly written language until he made it so; for in the phrase, 'of bec-ledene on Englisc wende,' bec ledene means not so properly Latin, as simply the *book-language*, the written tongue — a term not likely to be used if Anglo-Saxon books were then common. This consideration may be thought to furnish another argument against the authenticity of Asser, who puts a manuscript of Anglo-Saxon poetry with illuminated capitals into Alfred's hands when he could have been but four years old. It would, however, be going quite too far to deny that the Anglo-Saxon had been written at all until so late a period as the birth of Alfred.

bited in the works of different writers, and in different manuscripts of the same writer, vary to an extent that indicates a great diversity of orthography, if not of actual declension and conjugation. Its syntax is irregular and discrepant; and though both its grammar and its vocabulary connect it most nearly with the Low, or Platt-Deutsch branch of the German, yet it has grammatical forms, as well as verbal combinations and vocables, which indicate now a relationship to High-German, and now to Scandinavian, not to speak of Celtic roots which it may have borrowed from the Britons, or may have received, at an earlier date, from the ancient fountain of Indo-European speech whence the Celtic and Gothic, as well as the Romance and Hellenic, languages of Europe are theoretically considered to have flowed. In short, the Anglo-Saxon was much such a language as it might be supposed would result from a fusion of the Old-Saxon with smaller proportions of High-German, Scandinavian, and even Celtic and Sclavonic elements; and it bears nearly the same relation to those ingredients as modern English bears to its own constituents, though, indeed, no single influence was exerted upon it so disturbing in character as the Norman-French has proved to our present tongue.

We find, then, neither in historical record, nor in the structure of the Anglo-Saxon speech, any sufficient evidence of the controlling predominance of any one tribe, or any one now identifiable dialect, in the Saxon colonisation of England; and we may fairly suppose that both are derived, in proportions no longer ascertainable, from all the races and tongues which were found between the Rhine and the Eider, with contributions from the Scandinavian and Sclavonic tribes of the Atlantic and Baltic shores, and from other even more remote sources which have left no traces sufficiently distinct for recognition.

Although we are unable to say when the revolution took place, or by precisely what succession of steps the common speech of England advanced from the simple accents of the Saxon poet Cædmon to the ornate culture of Chaucer, it is not

the less certain that a change has occurred, which has separated the dialect that embodies the modern literature of England, from the Anglo-Saxon tongue, by an interval wider than the space which divides the language of modern Tuscany from that of ancient Rome.

There is little force in the argument, that we ought to call the language of King Alfred English because his contemporaries usually so styled it. That appellation has been irrevocably transferred to the present speech of England, and has become its exclusive right. To designate by one term things logically distinct is to purchase simplicity of nomenclature at the expense of precision of thought; and there is no linguistic test by which the identity of Anglo-Saxon and modern English can be established. Words, whether spoken or written, whether addressed to the ear or to the eye, are formed and grouped into periods as a means of communication between man and man. Whenever a given set of words and of syntactical forms becomes constant, and is generally accepted by a people or a tribe, the assemblage of them constitutes a language; but when the vocabulary and the inflections of a particular speech have been so changed, either by the decay of native and the substitution of foreign roots, or by grammatical corruptions or improvements, that the old and the new dialects would no longer be mutually intelligible, in either their spoken or their written forms, to those trained to use them, it is then an abuse of words to give to them a common appellation. To call by the same name a language like the Anglo-Saxon — whose vocabulary is mainly derived from the single Gothic stock, and whose syntax is regulated by inflection — and a language like the English — more than one half of whose words are borrowed from Romance, or other remotely related sources, and whose syntax depends upon auxiliaries, particles, and position — would lead to a mischievous confusion of ideas, and an entire misconception of our true philological position and relations.*

* The eminent German scholar Pauli, in his Life of Alfred, p. 128, speaks of

A modern Italian guide, in conducting the traveller over an ancient field of battle, and pointing out the positions of the hostile forces — old Romans and their Gallic, Epirotic or Carthaginian enemies — will speak of the Romans as i nostrali, *our* troops; yet no man insists on giving a common name to the Latin and Italian, or Latin and Spanish, or Latin and Portuguese, though either of these living languages is much more closely allied to the speech of ancient Rome, than is modern English to Anglo-Saxon. It is true we can frame sentences, and even write pages upon many topics without employing words of Romance or other foreign origin; but none would think it possible to compose an epic, a tragedy, a metaphysical or a critical discussion wholly in Anglo-Saxon. On the other hand, entire volumes may be written in either of the three Southern Romance languages on almost any subject, except modern mechanical and scientific pursuits and achievements, with as close a conformity to the Latin syntax as English construction exhibits to Anglo-Saxon, and at the same time, without employing any but Latin roots, and that in so natural and easy a style that the omission of borrowed words would never be noticed by the reader.

We do not yet know enough of the nature of language to be able to affirm that the vocabulary of a given tongue has absolutely no influence upon or connection with its grammatical structure. There are facts which seem to indicate the contrary; and when we find, in Early English, inflectional and syntactical features foreign to the genius of the Anglo-Saxon, but which had long before existed in the Latin or in its Romance descendants most favourably situated to exercise upon the speech of England the strongest influence that one language can exert upon another, it seems quite unphilosophical to say that these new characteristics were spontaneously developed, and not borrowed from those

the Anglo-Saxon 'vehicle of the laws' as 'the *German* language,' which he may certainly do with as great propriety as others call the Anglo-Saxon, English. If the language of Alfred was at once German and English, we must admit that it is not a misnomer to style the dialect of Shakspeare, Platt-Deutsch.

older or more advanced tongues which were then the sole mediums of literary culture for Englishmen.

The pride of nationality, if it has not prompted the views I am criticising, has at least promoted their acceptance, and they seem to me destitute of any more solid foundation. The Frenchman might, with little less show of reason, maintain that French is identical with the ancient Gallic, or with Latin, or with Francic, according as he inclines to Celtic, or Romance, or Gothic partialities, and might argue that the present language of France derives its grammatical character wholly from one of them, without having been at all affected by the inflections or the syntax of the others. The difference in the extent to which the tongues of England and of France have been affected by extraneous influences is wholly a question of degree, not of kind. French, indeed, in the opinion of some linguists, is more emphatically composite than English.* Still its material is chiefly Latin, though it may be impossible to say how far it is based upon classical Latin, and how far upon one or more of the unwritten popular dialects usually spoken of collectively as the *lingua rustica;* but there is no reasonable doubt, that both English and French are, and in all ages have been, as susceptible of modification by external influences, as the opinions, the characters, the modes of life of those who have spoken them, or as any other manifestation of the intellectual activity of man.

It is true that the tendencies of all modern languages known in literature are in one and the same direction, namely, to simplification of structure, by rejection of inflections; but this is precisely the tendency that would be impressed upon them by the common causes, which, in modern times, have operated alike, though in different degrees of intensity, upon every people whose history is known to us.†

* In the number of syntactical irregularities, of conventional phrases, of anomalous facts which are not so much exceptions to particular rules as departures from all rule, French exceeds every other European language. Does not this fact furnish some evidence of the very heterogeneous character of the elements which compose the present speech of France?

† See First Series, Lecture XVII., p. 367.

I cannot assume my audience to be familiar with the lexical or grammatical peculiarities of the Anglo-Saxon tongue, and therefore, inasmuch as some acquaintance with the vocabulary and the syntactical structure of that language is necessary to the clear understanding of the early history of English, I hope I shall be pardoned for something, both of general discussion and of dry detail on these subjects.

The inflectional system of languages is in some respects their least important feature, for it is, in the present condition of most tongues known in literature, their most mechanical and least expressive characteristic. We will, therefore, first inquire into what is of greater interest: the nature and extent of the stock of words which compose the raw material of the Anglo-Saxon vocabulary.

Independently of the evidence afforded by its grammatical structure, a comparison of its root-forms with those of Continental and Oriental vocabularies shows, that the Anglo-Saxon belongs to what has been called the Indo-Germanic, but is now more generally styled the Indo-European family, and of which the Sanscrit is regarded as at once the oldest and most perfect type. In its more immediate relations to the modern languages of Western Europe, the Anglo-Saxon, as I have more than once remarked, is classed with the Low-German branch of the Teutonic, and has, therefore, a close lexical affinity, not only with the many dialects known by the common appellation of Platt-Deutsch, but also with those grouped under the denomination of Frisic, and with the Netherlandish, or, as it is commonly called, the Dutch or Flemish.

Its vocabulary contains also a considerable number of words not met with in Continental High or Low German, but which are found in Celtic dialects. The Celtic contribution to the vocabulary, or, at least, that portion of it introduced by actual contact with British Celts after the Conquest, does not appear to have at all modified the syntax or otherwise affected the structure, or, so far as we have reason to believe, the articulation of the language. Hence it must be considered as having never

entered into any organic combination with it, or become one of its elementary constituents; but as having remained a foreign unassimilated accretion. Indeed, there seems to have always existed, during the whole historical period, a reciprocal repulsion between the Celts and all other European families, and their respective tongues, which have intermixed in a less degree than is usual between contiguous dialects. This feeling of antagonism was particularly strong with the Anglo-Saxons and their immediate descendants, and it finds very frequent expression in every age of English history.* Upon the whole, though the speech of continental Germany may, in remote ages, have been affected to an unknown extent by now extinct Celtic dialects, there is no reason to believe that the development and history of insular Anglo-Saxon and English have been sensibly modified by any such influences.

There is a class of words, small indeed, but not unimportant, which are thought to have been introduced into Britain by the ancient Romans, and to have been retained by the Celtic inhabitants — or possibly by some early colonists, of Gothic blood, already established in Britain at the time of the Roman conquest — and which passed into the Anglo-Saxon dialect, if not before the conversion of that people to Christianity, at least very soon after. One of these is cester, or ceaster, now a common ending of the names of English towns, which is the Latin castrum, a fortified camp or garrison; another is the syllable coln, in the name of the town of Lincoln, which is the Latin colonia, colony. Still another, probably, is cese, or cyse, cheese, from the Latin caseus, for we have reason to believe, that in this case both the thing and the name were made known to the Britons by the Romans.† *Street*, also, may be the Latin stratum, a paved way, and still more probably may the Saxon munt, a mountain, have been taken from the Latin mons. It

* See Illustration VIII. at the end of this lecture.

† See a note on the word *cheese* in the American edition of Wedgwood's Etymological Dictionary.

See also Illustration IX. at the end of this lecture.

would indeed seem that no human speech could be so poor in words descriptive of natural scenery as to need to borrow a name for mountain, but there are no mountains on or near the continental shores of the German Ocean, and hence the inhabitants of those coasts may have had no name for them.

But the great majority of Latin words adopted by the Saxons were, no doubt, derived from Christian missionaries, who at once established the Latin as the official language of the Church, and, to some extent, as the medium of general religious, moral, and intellectual instruction.

The best Anglo-Saxon writers were purists in style, and reluctantly admitted Latin words into their vocabulary. Hence the number of such in the Anglo-Saxon Gospels, the works of Alfric and of Alfred, and, indeed, in all the native literature of England, so long as Anglo-Saxon continued to be a written language, is very small.* This fact seems to authorise the inference which other evidence abundantly confirms, that the large introduction of Latin words into every department of the English speech, soon after it became recognisable as a new dialect, was due more to secular Norman-French than to Romish ecclesiastical influence, though the form of the words of Latin etymology often leaves it very doubtful from which of the two languages they were immediately borrowed.

Besides the roots derived from these various sources, there are in Anglo-Saxon a small number of words, such for example as circ, circe, ciric, cyric, or cyricea, church, which are supposed by some to have been taken directly from the Greek; and there are also a few which etymologists have referred to Sclavonic roots; but these, though interesting in ethnological inquiry, are not sufficiently numerous to have perceptibly affected the character of the speech, and they are, therefore, philologically unimportant.

There occur in Anglo-Saxon writers, as might naturally be expected from the territorial proximity of the Germanic and

* See First Series, Lecture X., p. 199.

Scandinavian tribes, many words belonging to the Old-Northern tongue*, and a considerable number whose etymology is totally uncertain, but the vocabulary is in very large proportion Germanic, while its composite character is further shown by the fact that a greater number of Teutonic patois find their analogons, or representatives, in it than in any other one of the cognate dialects.

Thus much for the proximate sources of Anglo-Saxon, for the immediate genealogy of its vocabulary; but what is the essential character of the words which compose it? The articulation, the mere sound of the words, is a matter of little importance in the view I am now taking of the subject, but were it of greater moment and interest, it would be altogether impracticable to present a satisfactory view of it. We know Anglo-Saxon only as it is written, and no ancient grammarian or lexicographer has recorded for us the figured pronunciation of its vocabulary. That it varied much in different provinces and centuries we may readily believe, and very probably many of the local peculiarities of utterance are faithfully represented in the present provincial patois of different English shires. The Norman influence, however, must have produced a very

* See First Series, Lecture XXII., p. 471. I attach much importance to the remarkable coincidence between the pronunciation of the languages of the Scandinavian countries and of England, as an evidence that the former had upon the latter an influence powerful enough both to introduce into it some new phonological elements, and to preserve others probably once common to all the Gothic tongues, but which have now disappeared from the articulation of the Teutonic dialects. I ascribe the loss of these sounds in those languages in some measure to the influence of classical Latin and the Romance dialects, just as the later suppression of the *th* in Swedish and its partial disappearance in Danish may be thought more immediately due to the influence of German. The lost sounds in German are wanting in Latin and generally in its modern representatives, and it is a strong proof of the tenacious hold of Anglo-Saxon upon the English organs of speech, that it held fast its þ and ð and *hw* in spite both of Romish ecclesiasticism and Norman conquest. The Scandinavian element in English orthoepy may fairly be appealed to as a confirmation of the statement of the chroniclers that the Jutes participated largely in the original Gothic immigrations; for even if the Jutes were not of Old-Northern blood, they had, from close proximity to that race, very probably adopted some of its linguistic peculiarities.

great derangement of the native orthoepy, if not a total revolution in it; and if we can rely on Mulcaster, and Gill, and other English orthoepists of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, there have been important changes in the standard pronunciation of English within the last two or three hundred years.*

Inquiries into ancient modes of articulation are extremely difficult, and doubtful in result, not only from the uncertainty which must always exist, first as to the extent to which any particular system of orthography was regularly phonographic, and secondly, as to the normal force of single letters, the standard sound of which is only traditionally known; and besides this, we are embarrassed by the confusion that attends all phonological discussion in consequence of the different appreciation of familiar sounds by different persons who hear and use them. We wrangle about the identity or diversity of vowels, and even of consonantal sounds in our own vernacular, which we have heard and employed every day of our lives; and pronunciation itself is so fluctuating that we cannot rely upon the traditional articulation, even of those sounds which seem most constant, as sufficient evidence of the ancient utterance of them.†

There is something surprising in the boldness with which philologists pronounce on the orthoepy of dialects which have been dead for a thousand years, or which are known to them

* See First Series, Lecture XXII.

† See, on the uncertainty of the pronunciation of English in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, First Series, Lecture XXII. In that Lecture, p. 484, I treat *oe* as representing the long or *name* sound of *o*, in Churchyard's system. Doubtless it does, but upon further examination I am not clear what Churchyard considered the elementary character of the vowel to be, and I am doubtful whether *his* long or name sound was like that of our modern *o*, or like *oo* in boot. In his letter to Sir W. Cecil, (Chips concerning Scotland, reprint, 1817, pp. 66—69,) he writes *boeld*, *moest*, *hoep*, *hoell* (*whole*), *boeth*, *knoe* (*know*), *moer*, in all which words we give the vowel the long *o* sound; but he spells also *toek*, *whoes*, *troeth* (*truth*), which we pronounce with the *oo* sound, and *oen* (*one*) and *bloed*, where modern English employs the short *u* sound. Several of Churchyard's contemporaries write with *oo* words which we spell and pronounce with long *o*. And as B. Jonson ascribes the sound of French *ou* to *o* in many words where at present short *u* is heard, it seems almost impossible to determine what the normal articulation of this vowel was.

only by written notation.* It would be very extravagant to say that the most learned phonologist has any means of ascertaining the true articulation of Anglo-Saxon, or of any form of old German, that, in any considerable degree, approach to the facilities we at present possess of learning any contemporaneous foreign pronunciation, French for example, by the help of figured spelling. But what approximation could an Englishman, who had never heard French spoken, make to the exact utterance of the nasals or of the vowel and diphthong *u* and *eu*, or how near would a Frenchman come to the two sounds of our *th*, by the study of written treatises alone? In these cases, indeed, we may very often convey the true pronunciation of a foreign vowel or consonant by comparison with the same, or a very closely analogous, sound in a language already known to the student; but in our inquiries into extinct phonologies we have no such guide, and our conclusions, though sometimes made very plausible, are nevertheless extremely uncertain.†

The orthography of a very large proportion of indigenous English words has undergone successive revolutions, which it is not easy to explain upon any supposition but that of somewhat corresponding changes in articulation; although it must be admitted that, if we suppose the individual letters to have had, in general, the same force as in our modern system, the Anglo-Saxon spelling of many words more truly represents the pronunciation of to-day than our present orthography.

Take, for example, that peculiar English sound, or rather combination of simple sounds, which we represent by *ew*, as in

* Halbertsma speaks positively as to the essential character of Anglo-Saxon vowel sounds, and yet admits that the very people who used them were so doubtful as to the true articulation, and so variable in their pronunciation, of them, that they did not know how to express them in alphabetic characters. 'Unable to satisfy himself, he [the writer] often interchanged kindred vowels in the same words, at one time putting *a* or *ĕo*, and afterwards *oe* and *y*.' And in the next paragraph he adds: 'While the writer is groping about him for proper letters, we guess the sound he wished to express by assuming some middle sound between the letters he employs.'—*Halbertsma in Bosworth, Ger. & Scand. Lang.* p. 37.

† See Illustration X. at the end of this lecture.

new, and, in other cases, by the vowel *u*, as in *tube*. Now an attentive analysis of this sound will show that, without regard to the semi-consonantal *y*, which is introduced immediately after the consonant preceding the *u*, it is composed of two articulations so rapidly pronounced as almost to coalesce into one. So near as this coalescence of sounds is capable of resolution, the first is the short sound of *i* in *pin*, the second is the semi-consonantal *w*. This class of syllables the Anglo-Saxon, and to some extent early English writers, spelt with *iw* instead of *ew* or *u*. Thus *hue*, complexion, *clew* or *clue*, *new*, *brew*, in Anglo-Saxon are spelt respectively, hiw, cliwe, niwe, briw. So the word *rule* — which it is doubtful whether we are to consider of native or foreign extraction — in the Ancren Kiwle, a code of early English monastic precepts, is written *riwle*.* In these cases the Anglo-Saxon and Old English spelling appears to be more truly phonographic than the modern.

If we assume that there is a general resemblance between the Anglo-Saxon and the modern English pronunciation of the words which are spelt substantially alike in both, we are driven to the conclusion that the former must have differed very remarkably in articulation from the contemporaneous Germanic dialects; and this would be a strong argument in favour of the position that it was widely distinct from any of them. If, on the contrary, we suppose that Anglo-Saxon resembled any Continental language of its own era in sound, we must conclude that our English pronunciation of Saxon words has been changed to a degree very difficult to account for.† It has been suggested that many important points of difference between Anglo-Saxon and English pronunciation on the one hand, and German and

* At present, *u* preceded by *r*, *j*, or *l*, in the same syllable is, according to most orthoepists, pronounced *oo*, so that *rule* rhymes with *pool*. This pronunciation has arisen from the difficulty of articulating the semi-consonantal *y* between the *r*, *j*, or *l* and the *u*; but the orthography *riwle*, and other like evidence, show that this was not the ancient orthoepy, nor is it now by any means universal among good speakers.

† See First Series, Lecture XXII., p. 471.

Scandinavian on the other, are due to the Celtic element in the former; but it is incredible that a language, which has added little to the vocabulary, and in no appreciable degree modified the syntax of either, should have produced any sensible effect upon the pronunciation; and besides, it does not appear that there is any such resemblance between the articulation of the Celtic and the neighbouring Saxon and English dialects, that one can be reasonably supposed to have influenced the other.

There is, indeed, one way in which English, though hardly Saxon, orthoepy has probably been modified by comparatively modern Celtic influences. French philologists maintain that the pronunciation of the Latin, in becoming the speech of the French people, must have accommodated itself to the organs and habitual utterance of a nation which if not strictly Celtic, had certainly a large infusion of Celtic blood. The modifications thus introduced constituted a permanent and normal part of old French articulation, and have consequently, so far as French influence is perceptible at all in English pronunciation, given a special character to that influence.

There are several points in which national pronunciation may be affected by foreign influence. The essential character of vowels or consonants may be changed, or the temporal quantity of the former lengthened or shortened; sounds long established may be dropped altogether, or new ones introduced; the accentuation of words or classes of words may be deranged, or finally the predominant periodic accent or emphasis may be shifted.

This last revolution is usually connected with a change of syntactical arrangement, and a familiar illustration will show how the Anglo-Saxon periodic accent may have taken, and in many cases doubtless did take, a new position in passing into English. In short, direct propositions, if there be no motive for making another word specially prominent, the verb in most languages usually takes the emphasis: Thus, English, I *saw* him; Danish, jeg *saae* ham; but French, je le *vis;* Italian

io lo *vidi*, the periodic accent, in each case, resting on the verb, in whatever part of the phrase it is placed. As a result of this and other analogous rules, every language has its peculiar modulation, depending much upon its syntax, and a change of verbal arrangement involves a change in that modulation. We see the effects of the habit of emphasizing the period at a particular point, in the pronunciation of persons who are learning foreign languages. A Frenchman just beginning to speak English will be sure to say, I saw *him*, instead of I *saw* him, because, the verb coming last in French, he has been accustomed to say, je le *vis*. If we could suppose that by means of a greater influx of French syntactical forms, the places of the verb and the object should be reversed in the English period, so that in the phrase I have cited, *him* should precede *saw*, we should learn to say, I him *saw*, not I *him* saw, and thus the periodic accent or emphasis would be transferred from the last but one to the last word in the phrase.

Now, something like the converse of this change actually did take place in the transition of Anglo-Saxon into English; for, though the position of both the nominative and of the oblique cases in the Anglo-Saxon period was variable, yet the latter, especially at the end of a period or member of a period, more frequently preceded than followed the verb, and therefore 'I him *saw*,' would oftener be heard than 'I *saw* him.' *

* As the *case*, not only of the pronoun, which in English remains throughout declinable, but of the noun, which in English has no objective or accusative form, was indicated by the ending in Anglo-Saxon, it was grammatically indifferent whether either the nominative or the oblique case preceded or followed the verb. But when, by the loss of the inflection of the noun, the syntax became positional, the prepositive place was assigned to the nominative, the postpositive to the objective. By this arrangement we have lost an elocutional advantage which the Anglo-Saxon possessed. In reading or speaking, the voice is sustained until the emphatic word of the proposition, or member, is pronounced, after which it sinks and becomes comparatively inaudible. The verb is generally an emphatic, if not the most emphatic word in the sentence; and hence if it be reserved to end the period, the whole proposition will be more intelligibly pronounced, and therefore strike the listener more forcibly, than if the verb occur at an earlier point. The best Anglo-Saxon writers show much dexterity in availing themselves of the liberty of arrangement which the structure of their language allowed.

In fact, the whole subject of the difference in the articulation of cognate dialects spoken by nations exposed to similar, if not identical influences, has been hitherto not sufficiently investigated; and the principles of phonology, the radical analysis of articulate sounds, must be better understood than they now are before any very satisfactory explanations of the causes, or even any very accurate statement of the facts, can be arrived at.

We find between the Swedish and Danish, for example, closely allied as they are in vocabulary and structure, not merely discrepancies in the pronunciation of particular words, for which an explanation might sometimes be suggested, but radical and wide-reaching differences of articulation, which no known facts connected with the history of either throw much light upon, unless we adopt the theory of a greater ancient diversity between those dialects than exists in their present condition. Thus the Swedes pronounce the consonants in general, as well as the vowels, with a distinctness of resonance which justifies the boast of Tegnèr, that the ring of Swedish is as clear as that of metal*; while the Danes confound and half suppress the consonants, and split up the well-discriminated vowels of the Old-Northern into a multitude of almost imperceptible shades of less energetic and expressive breathings.

In like manner, the Portuguese and Castilian, which have grown up under not widely dissimilar circumstances, are characterised, the former by an abundance of nasals, and by the *sh* and *zh* (ch and j), which the Spanish wants altogether,— the latter by gutturals and lisping sounds, which are unknown to the Portuguese.

The recovery of the true pronunciation of Anglo-Saxon would be important, because it would facilitate etymological research by the comparison of its radicals with those of languages employing other orthographical systems; and it would be convenient for the purposes of academical instruction and oral quotation: but the present state of phonology, which, like other

* Ren, som malmens, din klang.

branches of linguistic knowledge, is hurrying to conclusions before the necessary facts are accumulated, does not authorise us to expect that we shall soon attain to a very precise knowledge of its articulation, or be able to trace the steps by which its accents have been changed into those of modern English.

Inasmuch as the Anglo-Saxons learned the art of writing from Roman missionaries, the presumption is strong that their alphabetic notation corresponded nearly with the contemporaneous orthography of Rome, and hence that the departures of English pronunciation from the sounds indicated by the Latin vowels and consonants in Continental usage are comparatively recent innovations in the orthoepy of the Anglican tongue.*

* Although the runic characters were employed by some of the Germanic as well as Scandinavian tribes before their conversion to Christianity, there is no evidence that they were known to the Anglo-Saxons until a much later period. The only Anglo-Saxon character which resembles the corresponding runic letter is þ, and we know not when either this character or the ð were introduced into that alphabet. It has been said that the Scandinavians borrowed the ð from the Anglo-Saxons. The earlier Christianisation of this latter people, and their known missionary efforts, render this probable enough; but the Old-Northern races distinguished these two letters much more accurately than their insular neighbours, while the Anglo-Saxons employed them with a confusion, which seems to indicate more indistinct notions of their value than we should expect if either of them was of their own invention. Old-Northern literature shows no trace of Anglo-Saxon influence, and the instances of the use of grammatical forms resembling the Anglo-Saxon in early Scandinavian writings, or rather inscriptions, are too few and too uncertain to authorise the inference that they were the fruits of such influence.

There is little reason to believe that the Scandinavians themselves ever employed the runes for what can properly be called *literary* purposes. They wrote incantations, carved calendars and brief inscriptions, in these letters, but it remains to be proved that either the mystic lays or the prose sagas of that people were ever written down at all before Christian missionaries introduced into Scandinavia a new religion and a new alphabet.

The fact that the Old-Northern bards were well understood at the courts of the Anglo-Saxon kings, and other similar evidence, tend to show that, though the Old-Northern and Saxon were not regarded as the same speech, yet they must have much resembled each other in articulation. The Icelandic vowel-sounds, for the most part, coincide with the Latin — though the accented vowels of the Old-Northern appear to have had a diphthongal pronunciation unknown to any of the alphabets of Southern Europe — and here we have a further argument in support of the *general* resemblance between the Anglo-Saxon and the Continental vowels.

Rask supposes the orthographic accents to have lengthened the vowel in Anglo-

Saxon, and, in some cases, to have changed its quality, but not to have made it diphthongal; and I believe it is generally considered simply as a sign of *prosodical* length, not of stress of voice. But Craik — whose History of English Literature and of the English Language did not become known to me until after the text of this volume was prepared for the press — argues in a note on p. 297, vol. i. of that work, that, in some cases at least, the unaccented vowel had the *name* or long sound, while the accented vowel was pronounced short. Bosworth, Origin of Ger. and Scand. Lang., p. 37, speaks of 'the diphthongal nature of the whole system of Anglo-Saxon vowels.' Indeed, there are very fair arguments to prove that the Anglo-Saxon accents indicated prosodical length and that they did not, that the vowels were diphthongal and that they were not; and we may as well confess what we cannot conceal, namely, that we know next to nothing at all on the subject.

There are many cases where the diphthongal character of an English vowel is the result of a coalescence between two vowels which, in Anglo-Saxon and early English, belonged to different syllables. In the word *own*, the *w* stands for the Anglo-Saxon ȝ, which in modern English is usually represented by, and pronounced as, either *y* or *g*, though in other cases it has been succeeded by *w*, or by *gh*, with its strange variety of articulation. The *w*, then, is not an element in the diphthongal sound of the *o*, in this particular word, and *o* has precisely the same sound in very many syllables where it is not followed by *w* or by a vowel. The Anglo-Saxon word for *own*, adj., was aȝen, sometimes spelled aȝan, which was a dissyllable. In the Ormulum it is spelled aȝhenn, in old English *awen*, *awun*, *owen*, *owun*, and was, as prosody proves, pronounced in two syllables. The latter forms very easily pass into *own*, or *ōn*, with the diphthongal *o*, and the origin of the diphthongal sound in very many English long vowels may be traced to a similar crasis.

I may here observe, what should have been stated before, that, in printing Anglo-Saxon, I omit the accents, because they are wanting in very many of the best MSS. and printed editions, because the uncertainty of their value would only embarrass readers whom I suppose not to be masters of the language, and because I should, by employing them, increase the chances of errors of the press in printing a volume the proofs of which I shall not have an opportunity to correct.

NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

I. (p. 43.)

OATHS OF LOUIS OF GERMANY, AND OF CERTAIN FRENCH LORDS SUBJECTS OF CHARLES THE BOLD, SWORN AT STRASBURG, A.D. 842.

The text of these oaths, as given by different authorities, varies considerably. I print from Burguy, Grammaire de la Langue d'Oïl, 1853, vol. i. p. 19.

A.

OATH OF LOUIS OF GERMANY.

Pro Deo amur et pro christian poblo et nostro commun salvament, d'ist di in avant, in quant Deus savir et podir me dunat, si salvarai eo cist meon fradre Karlo et in ajudha et in caduna cosa, si cum om per dreit son fradra salvar dift, in o quid il mi altresi fazet, et ab Ludher nul plaid nunquam prindrai, qui, meon vol, cist meon fradre Karle in damno sit.

B.

OATH OF THE FRENCH LORDS.

Si Lodhuwigs sagrament, que son fradre Karlo jurat, conservat, et Karlus meos sendra de suo part non lo stanit, si io returnar non l'int pois, ne io ne neuls, cui eo returnar int pois, in nulla ajudha contra Lodhuwig nun li iuer.

Perhaps the most important point to be noticed in these monuments is the use of the futures salvarai and prindrai in the oath of Louis. There is much evidence to prove that the modern Romance future is a coalescent formation (see First Series, Lecture XV., p. 336); but we have here very nearly the present French future in this oldest specimen of the language. It is, however, certainly a *new* inflection, whatever may be its origin; for the Latin salvabo could never have become salvarai. The orthographical combination dh in ajudha in both oaths is remarkable, as probably indicating that the *d* was aspirated or pronounced ð, in that word and in other similar combinations.

II. (p. 47.)

USE OF PARTICIPLES IN GOTHIC LANGUAGES.

The participle absolute often occurs in the Anglo-Saxon gospels. Thus, in Matthew i. 20: Him þa soðlice þas þing þencendum, Vulgate, Hæc autem eo cogitante. In the Lindisfarne gospels we have the double form, ðas soðlice ðe he ðencende + ðohte, which shows that the translator hesitated between the Latin construction, ðas soðlice he ðencende, and the more idiomatic ðas soðlice ðe he ðohte. The Rushworth text gives, ðendi he þa þ̄ þohte, and, þis sodlice he þohte, not venturing upon the participial construction at all. The older Wycliffite text has: Sothely hym thenkynge these thingus; the later, But while he thouȝte thes thingis. In this particular case, the more modern translations all employ the verb; but, nevertheless, the absolute participial construction has become established in English syntax; and nobody scruples to write: The weather becoming fine, we started on our journey; The season proving severe, and the roads being impracticable, the troops went into winter-quarters; though it must be admitted that this form is less freely used in the colloquial dialect.

The present or active participle in older Anglo-Saxon is very generally, and, so far as I have observed, uniformly, used either with an auxiliary verb in such constructions as *was pursuing*, or as an adjective or descriptive epithet, or as a noun. In this latter case, it is often a compound of a noun, and a participle which originally may have governed the noun; and its employment as a technical participle in a dependent or an independent phrase (which is so very common in Latin and Greek), is at least exceedingly rare, if, indeed, it occurs at all, in Beowulf or in Cædmon. In the Anglo-Saxon gospels, and in later writers, this construction is very frequent, and we in English still say: Seeing my way clear, I went on with my project; Having large means at his disposal, he gave liberally.

I see no reasonable ground for doubting that these constructions were borrowed from the Latin and incorporated into the Anglo-Saxon as a new syntactical element; and if so, they are cases of a mixture of grammars.

I am aware that the active participle is employed by Ulfilas in accordance with the Latin and Greek usage, and that it is often found in interlinear, word-for-word, Anglo-Saxon translations from the Latin. But the very closeness with which the translation of Ulfilas corresponds to the grammatical construction of his original is a suspicious

circumstance; and whatever changes the translator or his copyists may have made in the original arrangement of the words, I think no person, who has practised the art of translation enough to be a competent judge on the subject, can doubt that Ulfilas rendered the Greek, first, word by word, and not sentence by sentence. These participial constructions are so adverse to the general syntax of all the Gothic tongues, and they so completely failed to secure adoption in those which had created a literature before translations of the Scriptures were attempted in them, that I think we are justified in believing that, in the employment of these constructions, Ulfilas was following the idiom of the Greek, and not of his own language.

I admit that the Anglo-Saxon compound participial nouns, in which the noun-element may have been originally an accusative governed by the participle, give some countenance to the supposition that, in an earlier stage of the language, the active participle was used as a technical *verbal* form; but that construction had certainly become nearly, if not altogether, obsolete before the translation of the gospels, if indeed it ever existed. These compounds are as easily explicable upon the theory that the participial element was used as a noun, as upon that of their having a regimen; and I think that this is their true etymological history. I am too well aware of the difficulty of proving a negative to affirm that no case of true participial construction exists in primitive Anglo-Saxon, but I know of none where the active participle is not used as a noun, as an adjective, or as a descriptive adverb. This last employment of this part of speech occurs in older, and sometimes in modern Danish; as, han kom *ridendes*, he came riding*ly*; hun kommer *kjörendes*, she comes driving*ly*. In German, curiously enough, the *passive* participle is employed in such cases; as er kam *geritten*, sie kömmt *gefahren*. It is true that, in the admirable Danish Bible of 1550, as well as in Christian Pedersen's earlier New Testament, the active participle used as an adjective (and it is not employed otherwise than adjectively or adverbially), has the same ending; but at present, when a descriptive, it ends in *e*, and the genitival *s* is added only in adverbial constructions.

The opinion of even J. Grimm respecting the Frisic language, and the facts on which those opinions are founded, may be cited in proof of the possibility of linguistic amalgamation. That great grammarian observes, Gesch. der D. S., 680 (472): 'Die friesische sprache hält eine mitte zwischen angelsächsischer und altnordischer,' and p. 668 (464): 'In denkmälern aus der mhd. und mnl. zeit erscheint sie noch mit formen, die sich den altsächsischen und althochdeutschen an die

seite stellen; die abgeschiedenheit des volks hat, beinahe wie auf Island, den alten sprachstand gehegt, und man ist zu dem schlusz berechtigt, dasz von dem mittelalter rückwärts bis zum beginn des neunten jh., wo im lateinischen volksrecht einzelne friesische wörter begegnen, und von da bis zur zeit der Römer, in der friesischen sprache verhältnismäszig weniger veränderungen eingetreten sein werden, als in jeder andern deutschen. auch in den jetzigen friesischen dialecten dauert noch viel alterthümliches, wiewol auf den westfriesischen die niederländische, auf den ostfriesischen die nieder-und hochdeutsche, auf den nordfriesischen die niederdeutsche und dänische sprache starken einflusz geübt haben.' Now this influence of the neighbouring languages on the Frisic is not confined to the vocabulary, but extends to grammatical forms and constructions, and, beginning on either the Netherlandish, the Low-German, or the High-German frontier of the Frisians, you may pass, sometimes by almost imperceptible gradations, but, in the case of districts separated by physical barriers, often by more abrupt transitions, from any of the first-mentioned languages to a Frisian dialect containing 'viel alterthümliches,' and thence, by a like succession of steps, through the Germanised Danish of southern Jutland, to the less mixed Scandinavian of the Baltic islands.

III. (p. 47.)

FOREIGN CONSTRUCTIONS IN ENGLISH.

Some of these borrowed forms in English have been supposed to be of Scandinavian rather than of Norman-French extraction. I think it more probable that they are derived from the latter source, because they did not make their appearance in England until after the Norman Conquest. So far as the general question of the possibility of mixed grammar is concerned, it is of little consequence whether we ascribe them to Scandinavian or to Romance influence, so long as the fact that they are foreign constructions is admitted.

In Icelandic, and in Swedish and Danish, the comparative of adjectives may, under certain circumstances, be formed by the equivalent of *more*, but the superlative is always an inflection, and not, as in the Romance languages, formed by the comparative adverb with the article.

The Icelandic did not express the possessive or genitive relation by a preposition. The Old-Northern af always took the dative, and is translated in Latin by ab, de, or ex. The modern Scandinavian

dialects use, in many cases, a preposition as the sign of the possessive or genitive, and they present some curious coincidences with English in the use of the particle. Neither the Danish nor the English employs the preposition af, of, as a sign of the genitive, with all nouns indiscriminately. In English, we may say: 'a man of intelligence, of learning, of capacity,' but not, 'a field of fertility.' In the latter case we can use the particle only with the adjective, as: 'a field of *great* fertility.' So, as Molbech observes, in Danish, 'en Mand af Opdragelse, af Lærdom, af Dygtighed,' not, 'en Ager af Frugtbarhed,' though we may say: 'en Ager af *stor* Frugtbarhed.' In both languages, where the preposition is used directly with the noun, a moderate degree of the quality ascribed is very often expressed, and hence we may suppose that an adjective of limitation is understood.

The Old-Northern, as well as its modern representatives, use a particle before the infinitive much as in English, and sometimes two, til at with an infinitive being found in Icelandic, as well as til at and for at in Danish. This corresponds with the vulgar English *for to*, as, *for to go*. It is said that the infinitive with æt occurs in the Northumbrian gospels and rituals. I am not disposed to dispute the fact, though I have not been able to find an example of this construction in the printed texts. But however this may be, this form is not the origin of the English infinitive with *to*, which can clearly be traced back to the Anglo-Saxon gerundial. It should be noticed that to wyrce, which occurs in the Cambridge edition of the Lindisfarne text of St. Matthew xii. 2, as an alternative for to doanne, is probably either a misprint, or an error of the scribe, for to wyrcenne, arising from the fact that the next word is insunnadagum (printed in one), the first syllable of which, in, so closely resembles ne in manuscript as to have led to the omission of the latter by the copyist.

It is a not improbable suggestion, that some of the Romance constructions, to which I have referred the corresponding English forms, are themselves of Gothic origin, for all Europe was exposed to Gothic influences at the period of the formation of the Romance languages.

IV. (p. 52) and illustration V. (p. 80.)

COMPARISON OF OLD GERMAN DIALECTS.

THE LORD'S PRAYER IN DIFFERENT GERMANIC DIALECTS.

1.

LOW GERMAN.

A.

Mœso-Gothic of Ulfilas. Fourth Century. From Stamm's edition, 1858, p. 6.

Atta unsar, þu in himinam, veihnai namo þein. Qimai þiudinassus þeins. Vairþai vilja þeins, sve in himina jah ana airþai. Hlaif unsarana þana sinteinan gif uns himma daga. Jah aflet uns, þatei skulans sijaima, svasve jah veis afletam þaim skulam unsaraim. Jah ni briggais uns in frastubnjai, ak lausei uns af þamma ubilin; unte þeina ist þiudangardi jah mahts jah vulþus in aivins. Amen.

B.

Old-Saxon of the Heliand. Ninth century. Alliterative and rhythmical paraphrase. From Schmeller's text, 1830, p. 48.

Fadar if uſa· firiho barno. the if an them hohon·
himilarikea. Geuuihid ſi thin namo·
uuordo gehuuilico. cuma thin craftag riki.
Uuerda thin uuilleo· obar theſa uuerold.
al ſo ſama an erdo. ſo thar uppa ift· an them hohon·
himilrikea. Gef uſ dago gehuuilikeſ rad·
drohtin the godo. thina helaga helpa.
Endi alat uſ hebenes uuard· managoro mensculdio.
al ſo uue odrum mannum doan. Ne lat uſ ſarledean·
letha uuihti. So ford an iro uuilleon·
So uui uuirdige find. Ac help uſ uuidar allun·
ubilon dadiun.

C.

Anglo-Saxon alliterative and rhythmical paraphrase. Grein's Text, ii. 285. Age of MS. not stated.

[Hâlig] fäder, þu þe on heofonum eardast
geve[orðad] vuldres dreámê! Sŷ þînum veorcum hâlgad
noma niðða bearnum! þu eart nergend vera.

Cyme þîn rîce vîde and þin rædfäst villa
âræred under rodores hrôfe, eác þon on rûmre foldan !
Syle us tô däge domfästne blæd,
hlâf ûserne, helpend vera,
þone singalan, sôðfäst meotod !
Ne læt usic costunga cnyssan tô svîde,
ac þu us freádôm gief, folca valdend,
from yfla gehvam â tô vîdan feore !

D.

Anglo-Saxon from the New Testament, Matthew vi. 9—13. Text of the University Edition, Cambridge, 1858. Age of MS. not stated.

Fæder úre þu þe eart on heofenum, Si þin nama gehalgod. To-becume þin ríce. Gewurðe þin willa on eorðan, swa swa on heofonum. Urne gedæghwamlican hlaf syle us to dæg. And forgyf us úre gyltas swa swa wé forgyfað úrum gyltendum. And ne gelæd þu us on costnunge, ac alys us of yfele: Soðlice.

E.

Platt-Deutsch or Sassesch. Sixteenth century. From Bugenhagen's version of Luther's High-German translation, text of 1541. Magdeburg, 1545.

Vnse Vader in dem Hemmel. Dyn Name werde gehilliget. Dyn Rike kame. Dyn Wille geschee, vp Erden alse im Hemmel. Vnse dachlike Brod giff vns hüden. Vnd vorgiff vns vnse Schülde, alse vy vnsen Schüldeners vorgeuen. Vnd vöre vns nicht in Vorsökinge, sunder vorlöse vns van dem öuel, wente dyne ys dat Ryke, vñ de Krafft, vñ de Herlicheit in Ewicheit, Amen.

2.

HIGH GERMAN.

A.

From Otfrid's Krist. Ninth century. Rhymed paraphrase. Graff's Text, 1831, p. 163.

Fáter unſer gúato . biſt drúhtin thu gimúato .
in hímilon ío hóher . uuíh íi námo thiner .
Biquéme uns thinaȝ ríchi . thaz hoha hímilrichi .
thára uuir zua ío gíngen . ioh émmizigen thíngen .
Si uuíllo thin hiar nídare . ſoſ ér iſt ufan hímile .
in érdu hilf uns híare . ſo thu éngilon duiſt nu tháre .

Thia dágalichun zúhti . gib híutu uns mit ginúhti .
ioh föllon ouh theiſt méra . thínes ſelbes lera .
Scúld bilaz uns állen . ſo uuír ouh duan uuóllen .
ſúnta thia uuir thénken . ioh émmizigen uuírken .
Ni firláze unſih thin uuára . in thes uuídaruuerten ſara.
thaz uuír ni miſſigángen . thar ána ni giſállen .
Lóſi unſih ío thánana . thaz uuir ſin thíne thegana.

B.

Luther's translation, from Stier and Thiele, 1854, after the edition of 1544, p. 21.

Unser Vater in dem Himmel, dein Name werde geheiliget, dein Reich komme, dein Wille geschehe auf Erden wie im Himmel, unser täglich Brot gib uns heute, und vergib uns unsere Schulden wie wir unsern Schuldigern vergeben und führe uns nicht in Versuchung, soudern erlöse uns von dem Uebel: denn dein ist das Reich und die Kraft und die Herrlichkeit, in Ewigkeit, Amen!

I here insert several Semi-Saxon and old English versions of the Lord's Prayer, not for their bearing on the question of the divergence of dialects, but because it is convenient to have all the translations of the Paternoster together, for the purpose of tracing the changes in English.

From a MS. of the early part of the thirteenth century. Reliquiæ Antiquæ, I. 235.

Fader ure ðatt art in hevene blisse,
ðin hege name itt wurðe bliscedd,
Cumen itt mote ði kingdom,
din hali wil it be al don,
In hevene and in erðe all so,
So itt sall ben ful wel ic tro;
Gif us alle one ðis dai
Ure bred of iche dai
And forgive us ure sinne
Als we don ure wiðerwinnes;
Leet us noct in fondinge falle,
Ooc fro ivel ðu sild us alle. Amen.

From a MS. of the thirteenth century, Reliquiæ Antiquæ, i. 282.

Fader oure þat art in heve, i-halgeed bee þi nome, i-cume þi kinereiche, y-worthe þi wylle also is in hevene so be on erthe, oure

ich-dayes-bred gif us to-day, & forgif us our gultes, also we forgifet oure gultare, & ne led ows nowth into fondingge, auth ales ows of harme. So be hit.

From a MS. of the thirteenth century, Reliquiæ Antiquæ, i. 57.

Ure fader in hevene riche,
þi name be haliid ever i-liche,
þu bringe us to þi michil blisce,
þi wille to wirche þu us wisse,
Als hit is in hevene i do
Ever in eorþe ben it al so,
þat holi bred þat lesteþ ay
þu send hit ous þis ilke day,
Forgive ous alle þat we haviþ don,
Als we forgivet uch oþir man,
Ne lete us falle in no fondinge,
Ak scilde us fro þe foule þinge.

From Wycliffe's New Testament. Oxford, 1850. Matthew vi. 9—13.

Oure fadir that art in heuenes, halwid be thi name; thi kyngdom cumme to; be thi wille don as in heuen and in erthe; ȝif to vs this day ouer breed oure other substaunce; and forȝeue to vs oure dettis as we forȝeue to oure dettours; and leede vs nat in to temptacioun, but delyuere vs fro yuel. Amen.

From Purvey's recension, same edition.

Oure fadir that art in heuenes, halewid be thi name; thi kingdoom come to; be thi wille don in erthe as in heuene; ȝyue to vs this dai oure breed ouer othir substaunce; and forȝyue to vs oure dettis as we forȝyuen to oure dettouris; and lede vs not in to temptacioun, but delyuere vs fro yuel. Amen.

From Tyndale's Testament. 1526. Reprint. Boston, 1837.

O oure father which art in heven, halowed be thy name. Let thy kingdom come. Thy wyll be fulfilled, as well in erth, as hit ys in heven. Geve vs this daye our dayly breade. And forgeve vs oure treaspases euen as we forgeve them which treaspas vs. Leede vs not into temptation, but delyvre vs from yvell. Amen.

In comparing the versions of the Heliand and of Otfrid with each other and with the other specimens, allowance must be made for

variations due to their poetical forms, for the paraphrastical character of both, and perhaps for differences of orthographical system; but after all deductions, there still remain parallel words and forms enough to serve as a reasonably satisfactory test of the logical and grammatical resemblance and diversities between the Low-German dialect of the former and the High-German of the latter, as also between the poetical Old-Saxon of the Heliand, the Anglo-Saxon of the text from Grein, and the prose of the Anglo-Saxon Testament.

Between the Platt-Deutsch or modern Saxon of Bugenhagen and the High-German of Luther the parallelism is perfect, the one being a translation from the other, and of course the correspondence is almost equally close between the Mœso-Gothic of Ulfilas, the Anglo-Saxon Testament, and the Platt-Deutsch of Bugenhagen, all of which belong to the Low-German branch of the Teutonic.

In comparing these monuments of the Teutonic language in different dialects and from different chronological periods, I do not find proof that at remote historical periods the dialects of the German speech were 'less plainly distinguished than in later eras.' On the contrary, it appears to me that the great divisions of the language were much less widely separated in the sixteenth century than in the ninth. So far as the evidence deducible from Ulfilas goes, the distance must have been greater still in the fourth century, and consequently the dialects appear to approximate as they advance, diverge as they ascend.

It is true that, in order to arrive at conclusive results, much more extended comparisons must be made, but I think that an examination of Hildibrand and Hadubrand, Muspilli, Notker, the numerous philological monuments in Haupt's Zeitschrift, and Graff's Diutiska, especially the ancient vocabularies and interlinear glosses of the Middle Ages,—for example, the glossary in Graff, I. 128, et. seq., from two MSS. of the eighth century,—cannot fail to strengthen the inference I draw from the different texts of the Lord's Prayer.

V. (pp. 41, 52.)

OLD GERMAN DIALECTS.

This, I am aware, is contrary to the opinion of J. Grimm, who says, Gesch. der D. S. 834: "Zur zeit, wo deutsche sprache in der geschichte auftritt . . . . ihre eignen dialecte scheinen unbedeutender und unentschiedener als in der folge." In a certain sense, the German language makes its appearance in history in the classic ages of Greek and Roman literature, that is, the language is often spoken of, and a

few proper and common nouns belonging to it are recorded by the writers of those periods. But these few remains give us no notion whatever of the inflexional or syntactical system of the language, or of the mutual relations of its dialects, and consequently no means of comparing or estimating the discrepancies of those dialects. On the former point Ulfilas furnishes us our earliest information, and, of course, our first *knowledge* of any Germanic speech dates from the fourth century. We have no contemporaneous or nearly contemporaneous remains of any cognate dialect, except a few single words from which no safe conclusions can be drawn, and hence we know nothing of the resemblances or diversities between the different branches of the Teutonic speech at that period. The assertion, then, that the German dialects, at our first historical acquaintance with that language, 'appear to have been less broadly distinguished than afterwards,' is a pure conjecture sustained by no known fact. For comparisons of the early and modern Germanic speeches, see illustration IV. at end of this lecture.

VI. (p. 52.)

SCANDINAVIAN LANGUAGES.

There is strong evidence to prove an identity of speech in all the Scandinavian countries at the commencement of their literature, or rather to show that, in spite of local differences of dialect, the language was regarded as *one* by those who used it. The testimony on this subject will be found in the preface to Egilsson's Lexicon Poeticum Antiquæ Linguæ Septentrionalis, where all the passages in Old-Northern literature which bear on the question are collected. But, on the other hand, a comparison of the diction of the manuscripts establishes rather a diversity than a unity of language at the earliest period to which they reach. We have no manuscripts in any of the Scandinavian dialects older than the twelfth, in all probability none older than the thirteenth century, though very many of the works found in these manuscripts are of much earlier date, and, so far as can be judged by internal evidence, more or less faithfully conformed to a more primitive orthography and grammar. In original manuscripts, or contemporaneous copies, of works composed in Denmark and Sweden as early as the oldest existing codex of any Icelandic author, there occur numerous words, forms, and constructions which are more closely allied to those of the modern dialects of those countries than to the vocabulary and grammar of the Old-Northern. It has been hence argued, that the

Danish and Swedish are descended, not from the Old-Northern of the Icelandic writers, but from cognate parallel dialects of equal antiquity. The evidence from the runic inscriptions found in the Northern Kingdoms—many of which are believed, and some almost certainly known to be much more ancient than any extant manuscript in any Scandinavian dialect—although their orthography is very variable and uncertain, points to the same conclusion. The strictly common origin, then, of the Icelandic, Swedish, and Danish, though very generally admitted, is not absolutely proved, and my own language on this subject in my First Series, Lecture XVII., p. 368 and elsewhere, must be taken with some qualification. But the error, if it be an error, was not material to my argument in the passages referred to, for the essential fact still subsists, namely, that while the Icelandic, protected from foreign influences by the almost complete social and literary, as well as physical isolation of the people which uses it, has undergone little change, the Danish and Swedish, on the contrary, have departed from their earlier forms to an extent, and in directions, proportionate to, and determined by, the amount and character of the alien influences to which they have been respectively exposed. The Swedish is still essentially a Scandinavian tongue, in both words and forms, but, though the Danes have preserved the principal characteristics of their ancient grammar, their vocabulary is lamentably denationalized.

See Molbech's sketch of the history of the Danish language, in the last edition of his Danish Dictionary, 1859.

VII. (p. 54.)

DIVERGENCE OF DIALECTS.

I beg not to be misunderstood as covertly arguing, in any of the foregoing remarks, against the received opinion of a common origin of the whole human race. I am not a convert to the opposite theory, nor do I profess to be competent to weigh the purely physical evidence on this question; but the force of truth is always weakened when it is sustained by unsound arguments, and I do not hesitate to say that in my judgment, the evidence derivable from actual, as distinguished from conjectural linguistic history, does not support the doctrine of the unity and common descent of the human species.

The opinion I have advanced of the divergence of languages as we follow them up to their earliest recorded forms, and their convergence as they descend, is not irreconcilable with the well-established fact of

the tendency of every human speech to self-division, and the progressive development of dialects under certain circumstances. Whenever a homogeneous people with a common tongue is divided into separate and unconnected tribes, by emigration, by local changes in religious or political institutions, or by any of the numerous causes which break up large nations into smaller fragments, the speeches of the different members of the race become distinct, not by virtue of laws of repulsion and divergence inherent in the language itself, but just in proportion to the character and energy of the new circumstances under which the separate divisions of the family are placed, and the degree in which the communication between them is interrupted.

Now, admitting that all men are descended from a single pair, these divisions of nation and of tongue must have been very common at that primitive period when agriculture and art did not yet admit of density of population, and when for the children of every swarming hive,

> 'The world was all before them, where to choose
> Their place of rest,'

and hence the primitive language or languages were soon split up into a multitude of patois, more or less unlike to each other and to their common source. These are events of which human annals have preserved only scanty and imperfect records; but the dialectic changes, produced by emigration and colonisation within the historical period, are sufficiently well known to enable us to conceive of the extent of the linguistic revolutions which must have occurred in remoter eras. But from the most ancient date to which authentic profane records extend, the *general* tendency of human political society has been towards increased communication, intermixture, confusion, and amalgamation of races and tongues.

Hence, during this period — the only period through which we can trace the history of language with any approach to certainty — all influences, with the exception of those of emigration and analogous causes of little comparative importance, have co-operated to produce a constantly increasing convergence of the more widely diffused dialects, and an extirpation of the less important and more narrowly limited patois. While then it is theoretically not improbable that the age of general approximation was preceded by a long period of general divergence of tongues, it must be remembered that this conclusion is mere matter of inference from analogy, and by no means an established fact; for all that *history* teaches us is, that the further we go back the wider was the diversity of speech among men. 'Tout ce que nous savons des langues aux époques les plus voisines de leur origine,' says Fauriel, 'nous les

montre divisées en dialectes et sous-dialectes peu étendus. Il faut, pour les amener à l'unité, pour les y fondre, d'immenses événements et un temps très-long relativement à la vie, je ne dis pas des individus et des familles, mais des peuples,' &c. FAURIEL. *Dante et la Langue Italienne*, 1854, ii. 303.

The proposition, that languages descended from the same stock are incapable of grammatical mixture, seems to me to involve a contradiction, and at last to lead inevitably to the conclusion against which I am protesting. It assumes that speeches derived from a common original, and developed from it by organic law, independently of external linguistic influences, become, by the action of this common law of their being, so diverse from each other in structure and specific nature, that although they still retain the essential characteristics of their common parent, no alliance or coalescence between them is possible. This is at variance with all that organic physiology has taught us, and if the alleged repugnance and irreconcilability be admitted, we must resort to the hypothesis of an independent creation for every known language. I am not prepared to adopt this hypothesis, but, at the same time, I admit that in the phenomena of language considered by themselves, and without reference to theological doctrines or ethnological theories, I do not find any serious objection to it; and if I believed in the impossibility of grammatical mixture, permanent linguistic hybridism, I should find myself compelled to espouse it.

None but the followers of the school of which Darwin is now the most conspicuous teacher infer, from similarity of structure, a community of origin between different organic species of the same genus in a particular country, or between representative species in different countries. By most botanists, oaks, between which no constant difference can be pointed out except in the shape of the cup of the acorn, are maintained to be specifically distinct, and not descended from a common stock. Why, then, is it not equally probable that the community of nature in man has produced any number of languages closely resembling each other, but not genealogically related? In comparing very many species of plants and animals, the points of coincidence are vastly more numerous and important than those of difference, but while a slight divergence in normal type is held to establish a specific diversity in the tree or the quadruped, an enormous discrepancy in vocabulary and syntax is not considered as disproving community of origin in languages. If language be considered as a *gift* from an external source — a machine with a certain limited range of movements — it is difficult to get rid of the theory of hereditary or rather traditional descent; but if we regard it

as an organic product, a natural result of the constitution and condition of man, and not as an assemblage of arbitrary or conventional symbols, it follows that lexical or grammatical resemblances in languages no more prove their original identity than a certain coincidence in structure and function of organ establishes a consanguinity between all the species of the genus *felis* in quadrupeds, or the descent of all the plants embraced under the generic term *ficus* from a single germ.

VIII. (p. 60.)

ANTIPATHY BETWEEN SAXONS AND CELTS.

Not to speak of earlier and less familiar instances, I may refer to the quaintly ludicrous account of the Irish and of the four wild kings caught and tamed by Richard II., in Froissart (who of course was speaking the sentiments of his English friends); to Stanihurst's Ireland, in Holinshed; to Wren's papers, quoted in the notes to Wilkins's edition of Sir Thomas Browne; and finally to Pinkerton, who argued so stoutly the inferiority of the Celtic race: 'Show me a great O',' said he, 'and I am done.' These opinions of course are not authorities, nor worth citing for any purpose except as expressions of a feeling which, as we have abundant evidence, has been entertained by all the non-Celtic inhabitants of England, from the Saxon invasion to the present day; and this is an important fact, because it tends to explain why English has borrowed so few words from any existing forms of the Celtic. If the Celtic Britons were a Christian people at the time of their subjugation by the Saxons, to the extent which their advocates maintain, and had the culture which has everywhere accompanied the diffusion of Christianity, they could not have failed to propagate that religion among their conquerors, unless an invincible obstacle was found in the mutual antipathy between the nations. But the Anglo-Saxons were converted by missionaries from Rome, and the same cause which prevented the incorporation of any considerable portion of the Celtic vocabulary into the Saxon speech — whether the intellectual inferiority of the Celt or the hatred of race — prevented also the adoption of the Christian religion by the invaders.

IX. (p. 60.)

CELTIC ETYMOLOGIES.

Koenen, De Nederlandsche Boerenstand Historisch Beschreven, p. 17, following Boot, ascribes a Latin origin to the Dutch words akker, *ager*, zaad, *satum*, hooi-vork, *furca*, juk, *jugum*, wan,

vannus, dorschvlegel, *flagellum*, sikkel, *secula*, spade, *spatha*. Every one of these words, and others of the same class, such as cultor, *culter*, or coulter, are found in Anglo-Saxon, and the argument is equally strong to show that that language took them from the same source.

The generally inferior culture of the Celtic to the Latin and Gothic races would afford a presumption that the Celts also had borrowed from the Romans such of these words as occur in their speech. But the curious and almost unnoticed fact of the existence of reaping-machines among the Gauls, stated by the elder Pliny, shows an advanced condition of both agricultural and mechanical art in that people, and, of course, authorises us to suppose that they had a proportionately complete rural vocabulary. The probability is that most of the words in question belong to an earlier period of human speech than that of the existence of any language identifiable as distinctly Celtic, Gothic, or Italic.

I have elsewhere adverted to the probability that many words alleged to be Celtic were of Latin origin, and that in many cases, roots supposed Celtic are, as probably, Gothic. Mr. Davies says that *cart* is Welsh from cár, a dray or sledge, but as I have observed in a note on the word *cart*, in the American edition of Wedgwood, cart occurs in the Norse Alexandur's Saga, of the thirteenth century, and may, therefore, with equal plausibility, be claimed as Gothic. *Gown* has been supposed to be of Welsh origin, but as this word is found in mediæval Greek and Latin, as well as in Old-French and Italian, it is a historical, not an etymological question, to what stock it belongs. See Du Cange guna, 2. gunna, gonna, gouna, gunella. The Welsh gwn, to which it is referred, is said to mean toga, but, as a question of *radical* etymology, more probable sources for *gown* may be found elsewhere; for the name of so complex a garment is not likely to be a primitive. Garnett thinks *barrow* is Welsh berfa, *button*, W. botwm, *crook*, W. crog, *tenter*, W. deintur, *wain*, W. gwain, *pan*, W. pan, *solder*, W. sawduriaw, &c., &c. But is not *barrow* more probably the A. S. berewe from beran to carry; *button* the French bouton, a bud or knob, from bouter, to push or sprout; *crook* cognate with Icelandic krókr, a hook; *tenter* from the Latin tendere, to stretch; *wain*, the Gothic wagen, vagn; *pan*, the Gothic panna, pande, pfanne; and especially *solder*, which is found in all the Romance languages, the Latin solidare, from solidus, used by Pliny in the precise sense, *to solder?* These are purely questions of *historical* etymology, and we can no more determine them by comparison of forms, than we can prove by the linguistic character of the name Alfred, that that prince had, or had not a real existence.

X. (p. 64.)

DIFFICULTY OF APPRECIATING FOREIGN SOUNDS.

Persons whose attention has not been specially drawn to the subject are little aware of the difficulty, I will not say, of imitating or of writing down, but even of *hearing* the peculiar sounds of foreign languages. An anecdote may serve to illustrate this. There is a Persian word in very common use throughout the East — bakhsheesh — meaning a gift or a present. It is the equivalent in meaning of the Old-English *largess*, and is employed by the attendants on great men and strangers, when gifts are made or expected, in just the same way. The Turkish articulation of all words is exceedingly distinct, and this particular word, bakhsheesh, which every traveller in Turkey hears a hundred times a day, is uttered with an unction that makes it very impressive to the ears of a stranger; hence one would imagine that its true pronunciation would be readily seized by the obtusest ear. Notwithstanding this, a distinguished gentleman who had passed most of his life in foreign lands, and had spent many years at Constantinople in a diplomatic capacity, was unable to come any nearer to the sound of bakhsheesh than *bactshtasch*. He thus writes in one of his published letters: 'There is only one word in all my letters which I am certain, (however they may be written), of not having spelt wrong, and that is the word *bactshtasch*, which signifies a present. I have heard it so often, and my ear is so accustomed to the sound, and my tongue to the pronunciation, that I am now certain I am not wrong the hundredth part of a whisper or lisp. There is no other word in the Turkish, so well impressed on my mind, and so well remembered. Whatever else I have written, bactshtasch! my earliest acquaintance in the Turkish language, I shall never forget *you!*' — *Constantinople and its Environs, in a series of letters, by an American long resident.* N. Y. 1835. II. p. 151.

If, then, persons of fair intelligence are liable so strangely to pervert the sounds of foreign words which they have heard and used for years, what can any man's opinions be worth on the sounds of a language which he never heard at all?

LECTURE III.

ANGLO-SAXON VOCABULARY, LITERATURE, AND GRAMMAR.

In order to a just estimate of the capacities of the Anglo-Saxon tongue, we must pass from the forms and sounds of its words, the sensuous impressions they produce on the organ of hearing, to their significance, their power of communicating fact and exciting emotion, which constitutes the essence of human speech.

We must here admit that our knowledge of Anglo-Saxon is not such as to enable us to pronounce on this point with as much certainty as in the case of many other languages, dead as well as living. The extant, or at least printed, literature of that tongue is not sufficiently extensive and varied in subject and in treatment to furnish us with the true and only means we can ever possess of learning the actual force of words, namely, observation of their use at different periods, in different combinations, and by different writers, and we therefore do not understand an Anglo-Saxon book as we do a work in a living foreign, or even an ancient classical, language.* True the close alliance between the Anglo-Saxon and English helps us to run through Anglo-Saxon narrative works, and simple homilies like those of Alfric, with great ease; but when we

* Anglo-Saxon lexicography was in a very unsatisfactory condition until the appearance of Bosworth's learned and laborious dictionary, which was a very timely and important addition to our facilities for studying the ancient mother tongue of England. The glossaries to Schmid's Gesetze der Angel-Sachsen, and to Grein's Bibliothek der Angel-Sächsischen Poesie, are also extremely valuable contributions to the same branch of philology. But, after all, word-books cannot go beyond their authorities, and a fragmentary literature can have but imperfect lexicons.

take an Anglo-Saxon poem in hand, we interpret, not read our author, and no man can make himself as much at home in Beowulf and Cædmon as a good Grecian may in Homer.*

But imperfect as is our knowledge of nice distinctions and evanescent shades of meaning in Anglo-Saxon words, we can say, with confidence, that in the highest quality of speech, the power of varied expression upon moral and intellectual topics, this language was certainly not inferior to any other of the Gothic stock.

In estimating its capacities in this respect, we are not to compare it with the modern Scandinavian and Teutonic tongues, which have received centuries of culture since Anglo-Saxon became extinct, but with those languages at periods when they had enjoyed a much inferior amount of Christian and classic influence. Christianity was introduced among the Anglo-Saxons in the sixth century, into those parts of Germany with which the Anglo-Saxons were most nearly connected, some centuries after the emigration of that people, and into Scandinavia and Iceland not far from the year 1000, though some small progress had been made by Christian missionaries in Denmark, Norway, and Sweden at an earlier period. It would not be fair to run a parallel between the Anglo-Saxon of the age of Cædmon,

* It may seem a trifling, but I believe it is a just observation, that one of the best practical tests of proficiency in a foreign language is the degree in which the student is capable of enjoying a blunder in the use of it. When we have so far appropriated a new speech that the mistakes of a stranger, in its grammar or pronunciation, produce upon us the same odd and ludicrous effect as errors in our vernacular, we may be sure that we have pretty fully mastered it; but we must regard ourselves as tiros until we have become thus far imbued with its spirit.

Learned Lepsius engraved upon the Great Pyramid, for the delectation of the disembodied sprites that haunt that 'pile stupendous,' and of such future travellers in the East as might happen to know no language more modern than that of Cheops, a hieroglyphic record of his antiquarian pilgrimage to Egypt; but I doubt whether Mr. Birch could contrive to extract an honest laugh out of the possible solecisms in sequence and juxtaposition of the birds, reptiles, and horned cattle that figure in that inscription; and I fear that the perhaps too poetical licenses of Mr. Conybeare's Anglo-Saxon rhythms did not strike Mr. Kemble as comical enough to produce that salutary *deopilation of the spleen* which the French hold to be so serviceable to the health of sedentary gentlemen.

who lived in the seventh century, and the German of Goethe; the comparison ought to be instituted between corresponding stages of philological development. Such a correspondence cannot be arrived at by a mere computation of time, because we have no sufficient means of knowing the precise syntactical or lexical character of either speech until some time after Christianity had bestowed upon them the Roman alphabet, and supplied both the means and the incentives for an extended literary culture. To this remark the Mœso-Gothic is an apparent exception. It is said that Ulfilas, who translated the Scriptures into his native tongue, in the fourth century, himself invented his alphabet, or rather accommodated the Greek and Latin characters to his purposes, and first reduced the Mœso-Gothic language to writing.* We should therefore suppose that he would have employed, in his translation, the current forms and the standard vocabulary of the heathen period; for the conversion of the Mœso-Goths was then too recent to allow any very essential modification of their speech by Christian influences to have taken place. In the want of evidence to the contrary, we should think ourselves authorised to suppose that we have, in the remains of the work of Ulfilas, a specimen of a Gothic dialect in what may be called a normal form, that is, a form spontaneously developed by the operation of its own organic laws and native tendencies, uncontrolled by alien influences,

* Theophilus, a Gothic bishop, or rather a bishop of the Goths (possibly an *episcopus in partibus*), was present at the Council of Nice, A.D. 325, and it is hence inferred that some considerable proportion of the Mœso-Goths were Christianized a couple of generations before the execution of Ulfilas's translation. There is also other evidence of the introduction of Christianity among this people, by Cappadocian captives, in the third century. It is not probable that a Christian nation would remain a hundred years without letters, and it is hardly credible that they contented themselves, so long, with so rude an alphabet as the runic. Ulfilas must, then, be taken rather as the improver than as the inventor of the alphabet he used. I see no ground for the opinion that the monkish or black-letter characters of the Middle Ages were borrowed from those of Ulfilas. Those who did not inherit his speech would not have succeeded to his alphabet. There is no very close resemblance between his system and the mediæval black letter, and the latter does not follow the arrangement of the former, or retain all its characters.

except, indeed, so far as the diction of a translation is always modified by the idiom of its original and the nature of its subject. But I have shown, I think, that the force of the participle and the syntactical construction of the period were, contrary to the genius of the Gothic family of tongues, probably conformed by Ulfilas to the usage of the Greek; and it is possible that other grammatical innovations were introduced by him. With respect to the inflectional forms and the general vocabulary of the Mœso-Gothic, however, we have no evidence of any corruption or change.*

Of other Teutonic dialects, we have only a few fragments, too inconsiderable in amount and of too doubtful reading, to serve as a basis for any general conclusions, until a sufficient time after the christianisation of Germany for important changes to have taken place.

The oldest existing Scandinavian manuscripts date only from the thirteenth century, though some of the works of which they are copies were no doubt composed during the heathen era, and many within a few years after. But it was the almost universal habit of scribes to conform orthography and inflection to the standard of their own time, and therefore a manuscript copy of a work of an earlier period is, in general, not admissible evidence as to the formal characteristics of the dialect of the original.†

The Mœso-Gothic, as we have seen, cannot be identified as the direct parent of any later Teutonic dialect; and as its lite-

* The Upsala MS. of Ulfilas, called the Codex Argenteus, either because bound in silver, or because it is executed almost wholly in silver characters, is thought to have been written not later than a hundred or a hundred and fifty years after the death of the translator, and the few other extant remains of that language are referred to about the same period. It is not impossible that the Mœso-Gothic had undergone some change in the interim, but its literature was apparently so restricted that there was little room for the written secular dialect to influence the sacred, and it is probable that in accidence and vocabulary the Mœso-Gothic of Ulfilas is purer and more unsophisticated than any other philological monument of European literature.

† See First Series, Lecture XIX., p. 421.

rature perished almost as soon as it was born, we are acquainted with it only in a single phase, that, namely, when it sprang into sudden existence as a finished medium of literary effort. All the other Gothic tongues, on the contrary, become first known to us, at periods when they had been subjected for a considerable time to influences which cannot have failed to produce very essential modifications in them, and when they were still in an unstable and revolutionary condition.

Between the Mœso-Gothic and the Anglo-Saxon, then, no fair comparison can be instituted, and as to the other cognate languages, the only just method of testing their respective capabilities would be to take each at the highest pitch of culture and of power attained by it, under those fresh impulses of youthful civilisation which, in most respects, were the same for them all.

The Anglo-Saxon reached this its most classic stage as early as the ninth century, and the works of King Alfred, and of Alfric the grammarian (who, however, died a hundred years later,) may be taken as specimens of the language in its best estate; the Icelandic was at its acme probably in the twelfth century, the saga of Njáll being the best exemplification; and the High-German, as it appears in the Nibelungen Lied, about the year 1200. Half a century later, the voluminous works of Van Maerlant, and other contemporaneous writers, first gave form and consistence to the Netherlandish or Dutch, and established its syntax substantially as it has since remained.

In comparing these languages at these respective periods, we shall observe that the Anglo-Saxon laboured under what was in some respects a disadvantage, that of being a more mixed and composite speech in point of vocabulary and, in some degree, of syntax, and therefore was less harmonious and symmetrical in its growth and development than the different Continental branches of the Gothic. Its derivatives are generally less easily and less certainly traced to more primitive forms and simpler significations. Hence the meaning of a

larger proportion of its words is apparently arbitrary, and not deducible from the primary sense of known radicals; and with respect to that portion of its roots which are not identifiable as Gothic, its power of derivation and composition is less than that possessed by other Gothic dialects over their own indigenous stock.

It is partly, no doubt, to its mixed character that the Anglo-Saxon is indebted for its copiousness, which is perhaps the feature of its vocabulary that first strikes a student familiar with the Scandinavian and German languages. In mere number of vocables, its poetical nomenclature, indeed, falls far short of that of the Icelandic; but the copiousness and wealth of a speech is not to be estimated by a numerical computation of words. The true test is: for what variety of distinct sensuous impressions, images, and objects, and of moral sentiment and intellectual conception, for what amount of attributives of quality, for what categories of being and what manifestations of action it has specific names. The mere multiplication of designations for a single thing, though it may increase the power of picturesque expression, and is therefore a convenient poetical and rhetorical resource, does not add to the real copiousness of a speech. Thus, the Icelandic prose Edda, or Art of Poetry, enumerates more than a hundred names for the sword, and a large number for the ship, and for other objects conspicuous in Northern life. Most of these were no doubt originally descriptive epithets, and their use suggested, in place of the generalisation of the leading properties or uses of the object which is expressed by its ordinary name, a sensuous image derived from some one of its characteristics, or a traditional recollection connected with the epithet, and thus incidentally increased the stock of imagery at the command of the poet. But when epithets become obsolete in daily speech, their etymological significance is soon forgotten, though they may continue to be used in the dialect of verse merely as synonyms for each other—a means of avoiding too frequent repetition—or in

order to employ a diction which is thought poetical, simply because it is not familiar.

The power of substituting a hundred epithets for the proper name of the object to which they are applied is not a proof of the copiousness of a language, even while the etymology of the epithets is remembered, and while they are consequently descriptive or suggestive; but when their origin is forgotten and they become synonyms, they are hindrances rather than helps, and even in poetical diction are little better than tinsel. To exemplify: to those who know that *falchion* is derived from the Latin f a l x, a sickle or scythe, the word suggests an image which *sword* does not excite, and therefore increases the picturesqueness of the poetical phrase in which it occurs. But to those who are ignorant of its etymology, it is simply what may be called a sensation-synonym for sword. It is recommended only by metrical adaptation, or simply by its unfamiliarity; it adds absolutely nothing to the expressiveness of the diction which employs it, and in most cases is, both to writer and reader, simply fustian. In words of this class, it must be admitted that the Anglo-Saxon is not particularly rich, and it may therefore be said to be inferior to the Icelandic in the metrical and rhetorical instrumentalities, the mechanical appliances, of the poetic art.

But when we come to the words which indicate different states, emotions, passions, mental processes, all, in short, that expresses the moral or intellectual man, the Anglo-Saxon vocabulary is eminently affluent. Hence Icelandic paints, while Anglo-Saxon describes and philosophises. The Icelandic saga is a pantomime, in which you see the actors in all the successive scenes of the drama, and infer their emotions, their aims, their motives, from their acts. The Anglo-Saxon gives utterance to the inward status, and discloses men's thoughts rather than depicts their material shape and their external actions. A better proof of the rich moral expressiveness of Anglo-Saxon than any citation of examples is found in the

fact, that those English dramatists and poets, who have most clearly revealed the workings of the heart and thrown most light into the deep abysses of the soul, have employed a diction composed in the largest measure of words legitimately descended from the ancient mother of the English speech.* It is in this inherited quality of moral revelation, which has been perpetuated and handed down from the tongue of the Gothic conquerors to its English first-born, that lies in good part the secret of Shakspeare's power of bodying forth so much of man's internal being, and clothing so many of his mysterious sympathies in living words.

Although, as I have remarked, Anglo-Saxon words not apparently of Gothic origin are not freely used as material for derivation and composition, the indigenous roots, on the other hand, exhibit a remarkable plasticity in the way of derivative formation, and a great aptitude for organic combination. Turner well illustrates this property of Anglo-Saxon by tables of primitives with their secondary forms, and he enumerates more than twenty derivatives from the noun h y g e (or h i g e) which signifies both mind and thought, that is, intellect quiescent, and intellect in action. Among these are verbs, secondary nouns, adjectives and adverbs, which, by various modifications, express not only mental states and mental acts, but a variety of moral emotions and affections. From m o d, mind, temper, and g e t h a n c, a word of allied original meaning, are given an equal number of derivatives; so that from these three roots we have, by the aid of significant terminations and a few subordinate compound elements, not less than sixty words expressive of intellectual and moral conceptions.† There are, besides these, a great number of other almost equally fertile radicals belonging to the same department of the vocabulary, and hence it will be obvious that its power of expression on moral and intellectual subjects must have been very considerable. Indeed

* See First Series, Lecture VI.

† See Illustration I., at end of this Lecture.

it would be difficult to find, in any language, a term indicative of moral state or emotion, or of intellectual action or perception, excepting, of course, the artificial terms belonging to the technical dialect of metaphysics, which is not at least approximately represented in the Anglo-Saxon vocabulary.

The Anglo-Saxon translation of the Gospels well illustrates the capacities of the tongue for a varied and comprehensive range of expression. We know not the history, the author, or the precise date of this translation, but it belongs to the best period of the literature, and was made from the Vulgate, or more probably, perhaps, from some nearly similar Latin version.* Our authorised translation of the same books is remarkable for its freedom from Greek, Latin, and Romance idioms; but it falls in this respect far behind the Anglo-Saxon, which admits scarcely any but indigenous words, and substitutes native compounds, or specially framed derivatives, for those foreign words which the English translators have adopted from Hebrew, Greek, Latin, and French, and incorporated into the modern religious dialect.

Although the Anglo-Saxon admitted of composition and derivation to a great extent, the number of its primitives, or at least of words treated as primitives because they were inca-

* To determine what text the Anglo-Saxon translation of the Evangelists followed, would require a far more critical examination of the various recensions of the Latin Gospels than I have had an opportunity to make. I will, however, notice a departure from the common Vulgate reading in a passage which happens to be at this moment under my eye. The present authorised Vulgate version of the Lord's Prayer, in Matthew vi., gives the fourth (the first *personal*) petition thus:—panem nostrum supersubstantialem da nobis hodie, supersubstantialem being used as the equivalent of the Greek ἐπιούσιον, while the same word in Luke xi. is rendered by quotidianum. In the first rendering, ἐπιούσιος is treated as a participial adjective from ἔπειμι = ἐπί εἰμί, in the latter, as from ἔπειμι = ἐπί ἔιμι. In the Anglo-Saxon Gospels, gedæghwamlican, or dæghwamlican, daily, is employed in both Evangelists. The Lindisfarne text of Matthew has ofer wistlic, which etymologically should mean dainty, the Rushworth, dæghwæmlicu, and, as an alternative, inštondenlice, which latter word corresponds very closely to ἐπιούσιος (ἐπί ἔιμι). The word used in the Lindisfarne text is the only one which can be regarded as a translation of supersubstantialis. Ulfilas, who made his version from the Greek, employs sinteins, daily.

pable of resolution into simpler forms and meanings, was so large that there was less occasion for compounds than in most other languages of the same stock. This fact, together with the mode of inflection employed in the grammar, accounts for the monosyllabic character of the words. Compounds are built up of at least two syllabic elements, and must, except in some few cases of coalescence of syllables, be generally longer than primitives. Hence, other things being equal, the language which employs fewest compounds will have the shortest words. If the same speech varies or inflects its words for tense, person, number, and case, by what is called the strong method — that is, by change of letters of the radical, instead of addition of syllables, as when we make the past tense of the verb *lead*, not *leaded*, but *led* — this is still another cause of greater brevity of words than is found in languages which inflect by augmentation.

It is surprising how far we may carry literary composition in English, without introducing any word which requires more than a single emission of breath for its articulation. The late Professor Addison Alexander, of Princeton, has well illustrated this property of Anglo-Saxon, or rather Saxon-English, by two spirited sonnets in which only words monosyllabic in pronunciation are employed. Some few of these, indeed, are Latin or Romance, and some of the verbs are declined by the weak or augmentative inflection, but much the largest proportion of the words are native, and in our articulation those written with two syllables are habitually pronounced in one.* One of these monosyllabic sonnets is as follows: —

* Something of the same sort may be done in French, and with greater facility in Catalan, because those languages, in naturalizing Latin words, often retain the stem or radical syllable only, and the Catalan very frequently drops even the final consonant of that. Ferreras wrote a Catalan poem of ninety-six seven-syllabled lines, consisting wholly of monosyllables, but in Romance compositions of this sort there is much less variety of thought and imagery, and less flexibility and grace of expression, than in the English examples I have cited. See Illustration II., at end of this lecture.

Think not that strength lies in the big round word,
Or that the brief and plain must needs be weak.
To whom can this be true, who once has heard
The cry for help, the tongue that all men speak
When want, or woe, or fear, is in the throat,
So that each word gasped out is like a shriek
Pressed from the sore heart, or a strange wild note
Sung by some fay or fiend! There is a strength
Which dies if stretched too far or spun too fine,
Which has more height than breadth, more depth than length.
Let but this force of thought and speech be mine,
And he that will may take the sleek, fat, phrase,
Which glows but burns not, though it beam and shine—
Light, but no heat—a flash, but not a blaze!

These ingenious productions are interesting, not as possessing high poetical merit in themselves, or as models to be followed in the selection of words, but because they open curious views of the composition and structure of our native tongue and its related dialects, and because they well illustrate what is considered as the general modern tendency of all human speech to simplification of form, and to a less mechanical and artificial syntactical system. Truly able writers select their words, not with reference to their historical origin, but solely for the sake of their adaptation to the effect aimed at on the mind of the reader or hearer, and he who deliberately uses an Anglo-Saxon instead of a more expressive Romance word, is as much a pedant, as if his diction were composed, in the largest possible proportion, of words borrowed from the vocabulary of Rome.

The masters of the English tongue know that each of its great branches has its special adaptations. The subject, in very many instances, as especially in metaphysical, philological, critical or æsthetical discussion, prescribes and compels a diction composed, in a liberal percentage, of Greek and Latin immediate or secondary derivatives; and this not always because the Anglo-Saxon wanted corresponding words, but often because they have become obsolete. Hence an author, who, in a dis-

course or a poem designed for popular effect, would speak almost pure Anglo-Saxon, might, very likely, in treating the themes to which I have just referred, find it convenient to exceed even the Latinism of Johnson.

There is at present a very strong tendency to the revival of obsolete English and Anglo-Saxon words, and the effect of an increasing study of our ancient literature is very visible in the style of the best prose, and more especially, poetic compositions of the present day. Our vocabulary is capable of great enrichment from the store-house of the ancient Anglican speech, and the revival of a taste for Anglo-Saxon and early English literature will exert a very important influence on the intellectual activity of the next generation. The pedantry of individuals may, no doubt, as the same affectation has done in Germany and Holland *, carry puristic partialities to a length as absurd as lipogrammatism in literature, but the general familiarity of literary men with classic and Continental philology will always supply a corrective, and no great danger is to be apprehended in this direction. In any event, the evil will be less than was experienced from the stilted classicism of Johnson, or the Gallic imitations of Gibbon. The recovery of forgotten native words will affect English something in the same way, though not in the same direction, as did the influx of French words in the fourteenth century, and of Latin in the sixteenth; and the gain will be as real as it was in those instances. But it is not by an accession of words alone, that the study of Anglo-Saxon and ancient English literature is destined to affect that of the present and coming generations. The recovery of the best portion of the obsolete vocabulary will bring with it, not only new expressiveness of diction, but something of the vigour and freshness of thought and wealth of poetic imagery which usually accompanies the revival of a national spirit in literature.

Although the Anglo-Saxon is the bubbling well-spring whose

* See First Series, Lecture IX.

sweet waters have given a specific flavour to the broader and more impetuous current of our maternal speech—and therefore some knowledge of the more primitive is essential to a comprehension of the history of the derivative language—yet the literature of ancient Anglia stands in no such relation to that of modern England. Beowulf, and the songs of Cædmon and Cynewulf, and even the relics of the great Alfred, were buried out of sight and forgotten long before any work, now recognised as distinctively English in spirit, had been conceived in the imagination of its author. The earliest truly English writers borrowed neither imagery nor thought nor plan, seldom even form, from older native models, and hence Anglo-Saxon literature, so far from being the mother, was not even the nurse of the infant genius which opened its eyes to the sun of England five centuries ago. The history and criticism of Anglo-Saxon literature are therefore almost foreign to our subject; but were they more nearly related to it, I should be obliged to exclude them from present consideration, because the illustrations I must adduce would be borrowed from a tongue generally unknown to my audience, and no translation could fairly represent them.

Although the literary character of Anglo-Saxon writers had no appreciable influence on the spirit, little on the form, of early English authorship, yet certain traits of the specific intellectual and social life of the Anglian people survived for a time, and manifested themselves in the nascent literature of the mixed race which had succeeded to the name and place of the Gothic immigrant. Hence, some general remarks on the leading characteristics of the poetry and prose of the Anglo-Saxons, considered as an expression of the mind and heart of that nation, will not be altogether out of place. The poetry of the Anglo-Saxons, so far as we know it by its extant remains, is chiefly sacred, or at least religious in subject, and, though not remarkable for plan or invention, is very elevated in tone, and exhibits much nobleness of sentiment and beauty of detail.

The poems of the early Christian era among the Scandinavians have, with some remarkable exceptions, not much merit except that of skill in overcoming the difficulties imposed by highly artificial forms and canons of metrical composition. In the higher excellences of poetry, the celebrated epic, Beowulf, ranks perhaps first among the monuments of Anglo-Saxon literature, but in subject, plan, and treatment, it differs so widely from the general character of the versified compositions in the language, that it cannot be considered as a product of the same genius or the same influences which have given form and spirit to the other literary efforts of that people. It is, I think, unquestionably of Continental and heathen origin, though in passing through the hands of Christian revisers and copyists, it has undergone the modifications necessary to render it less objectionable to the tastes and opinions of a converted nation. We cannot affirm it to be a translation, because we have no knowledge of any Continental source from which it could have been taken. In its machinery, it has many points of resemblance to Scandinavian mythic poetry, and though there exists no Old-Northern poem of very similar character, there are prose sagas — generally indeed of much later date — which in tone and treatment are not unlike the story of Beowulf. Its scenery and personages are Danish, and the whole poem belongs both in form and essence to the Scandinavian, not to the Germanic school of art. The substance of Beowulf, either as saga or as poem, came over, I believe, with some of the conquerors; and its existence in Anglo-Saxon literature I consider as one among the many proofs of an infusion of the Scandinavian element in the immigration.*

The poetry of the Anglo-Saxons is to be comprehended only

* The fact, that not the most remote allusion to the poem of Beowulf or to the story it embalms has yet been discovered in any Anglo-Saxon author, proves that it cannot have been generally known to the scholars of that nation, and it is not improbable that its un-Germanic character rendered it so little acceptable to a people chiefly of Teutonic origin, that it never obtained much circulation among them.

through a knowledge of their language, and I must refer those who are contented with merely general views of its character to the many translations and critical works on the subject which English and German scholars have recently produced. I shall, however, in bringing out the prominent traits of early English literature, as they from time to time develop themselves, have occasion to notice points of contrast and of coincidence between the products of Saxon and of English genius, and to present them more effectively than I could now do by a more extended special criticism. But I will here again refer, somewhat in detail, to an important deficiency in Anglo-Saxon literature, which I have already noticed as characteristic also of early English letters — the want of a vernacular historical school, which that people seems never to have possessed.

The contrast in this respect between the Anglo-Saxons and the Scandinavian Northmen, who were nearly allied to them in speech, and probably in blood, is very remarkable. The Northmen were men of action, enterprising merchants, navigators, hunters, soldiers of fortune, leading the van of every battle from Norway to Byzantium, subduers of savage and of effeminate, exhausted races, colonists, legislators, conquerors over the rigours of climate and the forces of inanimate nature. These heroic qualities were perpetuated in the energetic adventurers who made themselves masters of Normandy, were infused by them into their Gallic, Romance, and Francic subjects, and finally became the leaven, by which the now torpid elements of the Anglo-Saxon character were thrown into a new fermentation, and stirred to that marvellous physical and moral action which has made the English nation so long foremost among men.

The admiration felt by such a people for the high qualities, which alone had rendered possible the great exploits of their kings and chieftains, naturally disposed the Northmen to the preservation of the memory of heroic achievements, and to an interest in the personal history of men distinguished for prowess

and success. The saga-man, or reciter, was everywhere a favoured guest, and the skill with which these artists constructed the plan of their historical, or rather biographical, narrations, and filled in the details, has never been surpassed in the annals of any people.

The Anglo-Saxons, on the other hand, when by a series of spasmodic efforts they had expelled the Britons from their native homes, and established themselves in the enjoyment of the comparative abundance and comfort which the milder climate and more genial soil of England afforded, seem to have relapsed into a life of inglorious ease. If they were ever roused to deeds of vigorous action and martial daring, it was in strifes among themselves about the division of the spoil they had won, or in the defence of their new homes against invasion and plunder by the successive swarms of hardy and hungry warriors, whom the North was ever sending forth to tear from them the booty which they had wrung from the imbecile Celt. They had ceased to be an active, and had become a contemplative people; and so insignificant were the contests between the Saxon kinglings, recorded in the meagre native annals, that, as Milton says, they were not 'more worth to chronicle than the wars of kites or crows flocking and fighting in the air.' The life and reign of Alfred form a brilliant exception to the uninteresting character of Anglo-Saxon history; but in general, vapid, empty, and uncritical as are the Saxon chroniclers, they are, in the words of the same writer, 'worthy enough for the things they register.' Such being the true character of the Anglo-Saxon secular historians, it is strange that national pride should have led English critics to attach such extravagant value to the series of annals generally known by the name of the Saxon Chronicle.

The Saxon Chronicle is a dry chronological record, noting in the same lifeless tone important and trifling events, without the slightest tinge of dramatic colour, of criticism in weighing evi-

dence, or of judgment in the selection of the facts narrated. The following extracts are fair specimens: —

An. CCCC.XLIX. In this year Martian and Valentinian succeeded to the empire and reigned seven winters. And in their days Hengest and Horsa, invited by Wyrtgeorn, king of the Britons, sought Britain, on the shore which is named Ypwines fleot; first in support of the Britons, but afterwards they fought against them.

An. CCCC.LXXIII. In this year Hengest and Æsc fought against the Welsh and took countless booty; and the Welsh fled from the Angles as fire.

An. D.IX. In this year St. Benedict the abbot, father of all monks, went to heaven.

An. DC.XVI. In this year Æthelberht, king of the Kentish people, died; he reigned LVI winters; and Eadbald, his son, succeeded to the kingdom, who contemned his baptism and lived in heathen manner, so that he had his father's relict to wife. Then Laurentius, who was archbishop of Kent, was minded that he would go south over sea and forsake all. But by night the Apostle Peter came to him, and severely scourged him, because he would so forsake God's flock; and bade him to go to the king and preach to him the true faith; and he did so and the king was converted, and was baptized. In this king's day, Laurentius, who was in Kent after Augustine, died on the IVth day of the nones of February, and was buried beside Augustine. After him Mellitus succeeded to the Archbishopric, who had been bishop of London. And within five years after, Mellitus died. Then after him Justus succeeded to the archbishopric, who had been bishop of Rochester, and hallowed Romanus bishop thereto.

An. DC.LXXI. In this year was the great destruction of birds.

An. DCC.XCIII. In this year dire forwarnings came over the land of the Northumbrians, and miserably terrified the people: there were excessive whirlwinds and lightnings, and fiery dragons were seen flying in the air. A great famine soon followed these tokens; and a little after that, in the same year, on the VIth of the Ides of January, the havoc of heathen men miserably destroyed God's church at Lindisfarne, through rapine and slaughter. And Sicga died on the VIIIth of the kal. of March.*

Sometimes the events of a year, especially in the later parts

* I adopt Thorpe's translation in the Rer. Brit. Med. Aev. Scriptores.

of the chronicle, are extended over a page or two, but, in these cases, we have generally a mere accumulation of facts as barren and as insignificant as those I have cited, or, perhaps, an account of the foundation or endowment of a monastery, the institution of a bishop or the relations between the English church and the see of Rome. Of course, in all this, there is occasionally a fact which gives us a faint glimpse of the actual life of the English man and woman, as for example the narrative of the assassination of King Cynewulf in 755 (properly 784), and there are, here and there, notices of unusual astronomical and meteorological phenomena; but taking the chronicle as a whole, I know not where else to find a series of annals which is so barren of all human interest, and for all purposes of real history so worthless. And yet Ingram, the editor of the second edition of this work, declares in his preface that 'philosophically considered, this ancient record is the second great phenomenon in the history of mankind,' the first place being generously awarded to 'the sacred annals of the Jews.' After such commendation upon a work so destitute of merit and of value, we must admit that the Danish critic spoke in terms of great moderation when he affirmed that, as compared with the Heimskringla of the Icelander Snorri Sturluson, the history of Herodotus was the work of a bungler, and that of John Müller no better than a first essay.

From the want of historical talent among the Anglo-Saxons, we know little of their social life, and of the practical working of their institutions; but their literature, and especially their legislation, are those of a people by no means advanced in social culture, and their art seems to have always remained at a very humble level.* The specific causes of their decay we are

* Anglo-Saxon writers ascribe to their countrymen much skill in some of the minor arts, especially those subservient to the material pomp of the Romish worship; but the surviving specimens of their handywork do not give by any means an exalted impression of their abilities in this respect. It is disputed whether any remains of Anglo-Saxon architecture still exist, and the testimony is strong to show that their churches and other public as well as private buildings

unable to assign, but it is evident that at the time of the Conquest, the people and their literature were in a state of languishing depression, which was enlivened and cheered by no symptom of returning life and vigour.

The Norman Conquest did not cause, it only hastened, the downfall of the Saxon commonwealth, and by infusing the elements of a new life into an exhausted race, it restored its organs once more to healthy action and thus rescued it from sinking into the state of utter barbarism to which it was rapidly tending.

In order more clearly to exhibit the relations between the old and the new features of the speech of England, and to explain the process of transition from that which was to that which is, it will be necessary to devote a few words to a general account of the grammatical structure of Anglo-Saxon.

Of languages considered as grammatical individuals, there are, theoretically, two great classes; (*a*), those in which the syntactical relations of words are determined by coincidence or correspondence of form, the forms being varied according to number, person, case, mood, tense, gender, degree of comparison and other conditions, as for example, when by adding an *s* to the indeterminate or stem form of the verb *give*, we make it an indicative present third person singular, *gives;* and (*b*), those where these relations are indicated by position, auxiliaries and particles, the words themselves remaining unvaried, as when we make the same verb, *give*, a future by placing the auxiliary *will* before it. Practically, however, there are few, if any, speeches in which either of these syntactical systems is fully carried out, and the two are almost everywhere more or less intermixed. All assignments of languages, therefore, to either class, must be considered only as approximate and comparative statements of the fact.

were at best humble structures. Of all the works of man's hands, architecture is the best test of the artistic capacity of a people, and we may be sure that those who have never raised a worthy church or temple have never gone beyond mediocrity in the inferior arts.

The Anglo-Saxon, partly, no doubt, in consequence of its composite structure, partakes largely of the characteristics of both classes; but, as compared with modern English, its syntax may be considered as inflectional, and in a considerable degree independent of position, the sense being often equally unequivocal, whether the words of a period are arranged in one order or another. The inflections of the verb were more precise in the indication of number, and, though in a less degree, of person than of time or condition; still they were not sufficiently so to allow of the omission of the nominative pronoun. Auxiliary verbs were used much as in modern English for the expression of accidents, yet they were employed with greater reserve, and we can consequently, by means of auxiliaries, express in English a greater variety of conditions and qualifications of the act or state indicated by the verb than the Anglo-Saxons were able to do. It is singular that though there existed a simple as well as compound past tenses, there was no mode of expressing the future of verbs by either inflection or auxiliaries, and the Saxon could only say, I *give* to-day, I *give* to-morrow, not I *shall* or *will* give to-morrow. This was undoubtedly a defect, and we have improved upon the Anglo-Saxon syntax by developing future auxiliaries out of the independent verbs *shall* and *will*, the former of which originally expressed duty or necessity, the latter intention or desire, without reference to time.

The want of the Saxon verbal inflections for number and person can hardly be considered an imperfection in the English language; for inflection though it may reduce the number of words, gives no greater precision, but on the contrary, less force of expression in these respects than may be obtained by the use of auxiliaries, pronouns, and other determinatives.* In

* The employment of the nominative pronoun was felt by the Latins themselves to strengthen the force of expression, and therefore, though the distinction of persons is very marked in the inflections of the Latin verb, they often made it more emphatic by introducing the pronoun, as we do by re-duplicating it, though in another form. Thus the Roman would say, not simply vidi, (*I*) *saw*, but ego vidi, or even egomet vidi, in cases where we should say, *I saw* (*it*) *myself*.

syntaxes where the pronoun is always expressed, as it is in Anglo-Saxon and English except in the imperative, the distinction of number and person is wholly superfluous. Thus, where a foreigner says, in his broken English, *he give*, instead of *he gives*, we understand him perfectly. The omission of the *s*, the sign of the singular number and third person, occasions no embarrassment, and it would be no detriment to English syntax if we ourselves were to omit it altogether. But in Latin and Italian, where the pronoun is very often omitted, a mistake in the characteristic ending confounds the listener.

So the limitation of particular past or future inflections, or even auxiliary combinations, to specific portions of time, is a source of constant embarrassment in the use of words, without any corresponding logical or rhetorical benefit. Thus the French rule, strict conformity to which requires us to say:—elle *chanta hier* au lever du soleil, she *sang* yesterday at sunrise, but, elle *a chanté ce matin* au lever du soleil, she *has sung* this morning at sunrise, is a blemish in the syntax, not an advantage. In these and other like phrases, the time is really fixed, not by the form of the verb, but by the words *yesterday* and *this morning*, and the distinction between the tenses has, in their present use, no solid foundation; whereas in English the difference between the preterite and the compound, *he sang*, and *he has sung*, is a logical one. The consequence is that in French practice, the grammatical distinction has been found too subtle to be observed, and the compound is very frequently employed when the preterite should be.

Another difference between Anglo-Saxon and English is, that the latter has nearly got rid of the perplexing and unprofitable distinction of grammatical gender. In Anglo-Saxon, as in Greek, Latin and German, nouns have three genders, and these do not depend upon sex, even in the case of organised beings capable of being thus distinguished. This confusion is, however, not carried so far in Anglo-Saxon as in German, where Frauenzimmer, *woman*, is neuter, and Mannsperson, a

male person, is feminine, or as in Swedish, where menniskja, *man* in the abstract, is feminine; but still the Saxon mæden, our modern *maiden*, is, like the German corresponding mädchen, a neuter, and in the case of inanimate objects, to which genders are conventionally ascribed, they are applied in a very different way from our own. Thus in Anglo-Saxon, as also in Icelandic, the word for *moon*, mona, is masculine, that for *sun*, sunne, feminine.*

It may be remarked, in passing, that the theory of grammatical gender has not been much attended to by most philologists, and, so far as I am aware, has not been satisfactorily discussed by any. The distinction of gender, however arbitrarily it may be applied — and there are few languages where it is not much more so than in English — seems to be more tenaciously and constantly adhered to than any other grammatical peculiarity. In German and French, where the genders appear to be almost wholly conventional, mistakes in gender are rarer than any other error in speech, and in all languages with grammatical gender, the blunders of foreigners in this respect are more ludicrous to a native ear than any others whatever, even when they occur in pronouns or in the names of inanimate objects. We cannot without a smile hear a French-

* In German, the diminutives are neuter, without regard to sex. Vater and Mutter, Bruder and Schwester, father, mother, brother and sister, lose their sexuality and become neuter in taking the affectionate or coaxing forms, Väterchen, Mütterchen, Bruderlein, Schwesterlein. So far is this carried that the distinctive designations of sex in the lower animals, Männchen and Weibchen, male and female, are grammatically neuter, and when the heroine of a popular tale has a pet diminutive name, as Mariechen, the neuter pronoun es, *it*, is used instead of the feminine, in speaking of her. In Italian, the diminutive of feminine nouns is often masculine, which here represents the Latin neuter, that gender not being recognised in Italian grammar, and la tavola, the table, may have il tavolino, the little table, for its diminutive.

In the young of animals, the general external form marks the distinction of sex much less plainly than in the adult. This is doubtless the reason why the neuter pronoun *it* is so commonly applied to infants and other young creatures in English, and it may be from analogy with this fact that the diminutives I have mentioned have been made neuter. There are many reasons, however, for believing that grammatical gender was originally wholly independent of sex.

man speak of a woman as *he*, or read the concluding sentence of the preface to the Portuguese Guide of Fonseca and Carolino, in which the authors, after expressing the hope that their book may secure acceptance with studious persons, add: 'and especially of youth, at *which* we dedicate *him* particularly.'* But to us, who in general treat inanimate objects as without gender, it is hard to see why it should provoke the mirth of a Frenchman, when a foreigner, in speaking French, makes the noun table a masculine instead of a feminine.

The Anglo-Saxon adjectives also had three genders, though these were by no means accurately or uniformly discriminated, and they had that farther inconvenience, which beginners find such a stumbling-block in German grammar, of distinct definite and indefinite forms — a subtlety which answers no purpose but to embarrass and confound. The adjectives were compared by inflection, and both adjective and noun had several inflections for case, but these were not so well discriminated as to add essentially to precision of expression; and I do not know that English syntax is in any respect more equivocal or ambiguous for the want of them.

Upon the whole, I am inclined to think that while our present syntax is in many respects more direct, precise and simple than the ancient, the Anglo-Saxon grammar had no advantages over the modern English but these: first, greater liberty in the arrangement of words in the period, which is an important rhetorical convenience, both with respect to force of expression and to melodious sequence of sound; and, second, a somewhat greater abundance of rhymes, as well as variety of metrical feet, which, in inflected languages, facilitate poetical composition and relieve the ear from the perpetual recurrence of the same

* O Novo Guia da Conversação, em Portuguez é Inglez. The New Guide of the Conversation in Portuguese and English, por José da Fonseca e Pedro Carolino. Paris, 1855.

This is, I imagine, the most ridiculous collection of blunders anywhere to be found in a single volume.

pairs of rhyming words now become so wearisome in English poetry.*

English grammar is now too settled, if not in its forms, at least in its tendencies, to be likely to revive any of the obsolete characteristics of Anglo-Saxon inflection, but we may possibly restore, for poetical purposes, the old English infinitive and plural verbal endings in *en*, as to *loven* for to *love*, they *loven* for they *love*, which Spenser did not scruple freely to use, though in his time they were quite obsolete in prose. Language seldom goes back in its forms, though the re-animation of seemingly dead words is common in all literatures. The freedom of syntactical arrangement which was possessed by the Anglo-Saxon is irrecoverably gone, and it is the only one of our losses for which modern syntax gives us no equivalent. But this was a rhetorical, not a logical advantage; for the usual order of words in Anglo-Saxon did not conform to any natural or so called logical succession, and therefore — though it might make a period more effective, in a spoken harangue, by putting the most stirring words in the most prominent positions, or where, according to the national periodic intonation, the emphasis naturally falls — yet it did not make the grammatical construction clearer, but, on the contrary, rather tended to involve and obscure it.†

The principal philological gains to be expected from the study of Anglo-Saxon are, a more thorough acquaintance with English etymology and a better understanding of the radical linguistic principles which are the foundation of the grammatical structure of our mother tongue; and we shall gain, as I have already remarked, a considerable addition of expressive native words to the present vocabulary and a corresponding enrichment of our literary diction. That the revival of words of the Gothic stock will supplant or expel much of the Romance portion of our modern English is neither to be expected nor de-

* See First Series, Lectures XXIII. and XXIV.

† See First Series, Lecture XVI., pp. 352, 358.

sired. Social life in our time has become too many-sided, it appropriates too much of the new and foreign, and resuscitates too much of the departed and the dormant, to be content with anything short of the utmost largeness of expression. Images, if not ideas, are multiplying more rapidly than appropriate names for them, and our vocabulary will continue to extend as long as our culture advances.

The view I have taken of Anglo-Saxon grammar is extremely general, it would be nearer the truth to say, superficial, but anything of minuteness and fulness would be inconsistent with oral exhibition, and would, moreover, consume such an amount of time that too little would be left for the discussion of points of more immediate interest. A comparison of a few periods from the narrative of Ohther in King Alfred's Orosius, and from the preface to Alfred's Boethius, with English translations, will serve better than more of formal detail, to illustrate the most important differences between the two languages*; and in future lectures I shall endeavour to convey a general notion of the gradual processes of linguistic change, by presenting a psalm and a chapter of the Anglo-Saxon Gospels with a series of versions of the same in the successive stages of English. Before proceeding to the comparative analysis, it is necessary to present a few paradigms of the principal parts of speech in Anglo-Saxon; the other grammatical peculiarities of the language may be gradually brought out as we advance in the decomposition and construction of sentences.†

* See Illustration IV., at end of this Lecture.

† See Illustration III., at end of this Lecture.

NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

I. (p. 95.)

ANGLO-SAXON POWER OF DERIVATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF RADICAL SIGNIFICATION OF WORDS.

From Turner's History of the Anglo-Saxons, Appendix I.

ANCIENT NOUN:

hyge or hige, mind or thought.
Secondary meaning:—care, diligence, study.
hoga, care.
hogu, care, industry, effort.

Adjectives, being the noun so applied:
hige, diligent, studious, attentive.
hoga, prudent, solicitous.

Verbs from the noun:
hogian, to meditate, to study, to think, to be wise; to be anxious: and hence, to groan.
hygian, hyggan, } to study, to be solicitous, to endeavour.
hicgan, hycgan, } to study, to explore, to seek vehemently, to endeavour, to struggle.

Secondary noun derived from the verb:
hogung, care, effort, endeavour.

Secondary nouns compounded of the ancient noun and another:
higecræft, acuteness of mind.
higeleast, negligence, carelessness.
higesorga, anxieties, mental griefs.
hogascip, hogoscip, } prudence.
hygeleast, folly, madness, scurrility.
hygesceaft, the mind or thought.

Adjectives composed of the ancient noun and a meaning word:

hygelease, void of mind, foolish.

hyge rof, } magnanimous, excellent in mind.
hige rof, }

hogfært, } prudent.
hogofeart, }

hogfull, anxious, full of care.

hige frod, wise, prudent in mind.

hige leas, negligent, incurious.

hige strang, strong in mind.

hige thancle, cautious, provident, thoughtful.

Adverbs from the adjective:

higeleaslice, negligently, incuriously.

hogfull lice, anxiously.

ANCIENT NOUN:

Mod, the mind; also, passion, irritability.

Verb:

modian, } to be high-minded.
modigan, } to rage.
modgian, } to swell.

Adjectives composed of the noun and another word or syllable:

modeg, } irritable.
modig, } angry, proud.

modful, full of mind, irritable.

modga, elated, proud, distinguished.

modhwata, fervid in mind.

modilic, magnanimous.

mod leas, weak-minded, pusillanimous.

mod stathol, firm-minded.

modthwer, patient in mind, meek, mild

Secondary nouns composed of the ancient noun and some other:

mod gethanc, thoughts of the mind, council.

mod gethoht, strength of mind, reasoning.

mod gewinne, conflicts of mind.

modes mynla, the affections of the mind, the inclinations.

modhete, heat of mind, anger.

modleaste, folly, pusillanimity, slothfulness.

modnesse, pride.

modsefa, the intellect, sensation, intelligence.

mod sorg, grief of mind.

Secondary nouns, of later formation, composed of an adjective and another noun:

modignesse, } moodiness, pride, animosity.
modinesse, }
mod seocnesse, sickness of mind.
mod statholnysse, firmness of mind, fortitude.
mod sumnesse, concord.
mod thwernesse, patience, meekness.

Adverb formed from the adjective:

modiglice, proudly, angrily.

ANCIENT NOUN:

Wit, } the mind, genius, intellect, sense.
Gewit, }
Secondary meaning: — wisdom, prudence.

Noun applied as an adjective:

wita, } wise, skilful.
wite, }
gewita, conscious; hence, a witness.

Verb formed from the noun:

witan, to know, to perceive.
gewitan, to understand.
witegian, to prophesy.

Adjectives composed of the ancient noun, and an additional syllable or word:

wittig, wise, skilled, ingenious, prudent.
ge-witig, knowing.
ge-witleas, ignorant, foolish.
ge-wittig, intelligent, conscious.
ge-witseoc, ill in mind, demoniac.
witol, wittol, wise, knowing.

Secondary nouns formed of the ancient noun and another noun:

witedom, the knowledge of judgment, prediction.
witega, a prophet.
witegung, prophecy.
wite saga, a prophet.
ge-witleast, folly, madness.
ge-wit loca, the mind.
ge-witness, witness.

ge-witscipe, witness.
wite-clofe, trifles.
witsord, the answer of the wise.

Nouns of more recent date, having been formed out of the adjectives:
gewitseocness, insanity.
witigdom, knowledge, wisdom, prescience.
witolnesse, knowledge, wisdom.

Secondary adjective, formed upon the secondary noun:
witedomlic, prophetical.

Conjunctions;
witedlice, witodlice, } indeed, for, but, to-wit.

Adverbs formed from participles and adjectives:
witendlice, wittiglice, } knowingly.

ANCIENT NOUN:
Ge-thanc, Ge-thonc, } the mind, thought, opinion.
thanc, the will.
thonc, the thought.

Secondary meaning: an act of the will, or thanks.
thing, ge-thing, } a council.

And from the consequence conferred from sitting at the council came
ge-thincth, honour, dignity.

Verbs formed from the noun:
thincan, thencan, } to think, to conceive, to feel, to reason, to consider.
ge-thencan, ge-thengcan, } to think.
thancian, ge-thancian, } to thank.
thingan, to address, to speak, to supplicate.
ge-thancmetan, to consider.

Adjectives formed from the ancient noun:
thancol, thoncol, } thoughtful, meditative, cautious.
ge-thancol, mindful.

thancful, thankful, ingenious, content.
thancwurth, grateful.
thancolmod, provident, wise.

Secondary nouns formed from the verb:

thoht, } thinking, thought.
ge-thoht, }
ge-theaht, council.
ge-theahtere, councillor.
thancung, thanking.
thancmetuncg, deliberation.

Secondary verb from secondary noun:

ge-theahtian, to consult.

More recent noun from this verb:

ge-theathing, council, consultation.

Another secondary verb:

ymbethencan, to think about any thing.

Adjective from secondary verb:

ge-theahtendlic, consulting.

Adverb from adjective:

thancwurthlice, gratefully.

It is evident that in this list, which might be considerably enlarged from the same roots, different orthographical forms are occasionally given as different words, and the proficient in Anglo-Saxon will see that there is room for criticism in several other respects. But I choose to print my author as I find him in the Philadelphia edition of 1841, making no changes in the words, except, to lessen the chances of typographical mistake, the substitution of the modern English for the Saxon character. There is always something to be learned from even the errors of a scholar,—at least the lesson of humility, when we consider our own liability to similar shortcomings.

II. (p. 97.)

MONOSYLLABIC CATALAN POETRY.

The rarity of Catalan books in America justifies me, I think, in printing a part of this poem, which Ballot y Torres, who quotes it in

the preface to his Gramatica y Apología de la Llengua Cathalana, thus introduces:

'He ja dit també que ab dificultat se podrá trobar altra llengua, que sia mes breu y concisa que la nostra; y axó es per la abundancia que tè de monossíllabos, com es de véurer en las seguents quartetas, que compongué lo númen poétich de Don Ignasi Ferréras, doctor en medicina.'

QUARTETAS.

A Déu, un en tres, y al Fill fet hom.

Un sol Déu, que tot ho pot,
Es lo qui es, un ser en tres:
No son tres Déus, un sol es
Lo Déu del cel, que es en tot.

Si ab est un sol ser tres son,
Cóm pot ser no mes que un Déu,
Qui fa lo foch y la neu,
La llum, los cels y lo mon?

Un sol es; puix á ser tres,
Fins á tres sers se han de dar;
Y si es un sol ser, es clar
Que es un sol Déu y no mes.

Es ell lo qui ha fet lo llum,
Lo blanch, lo foch y lo net,
Per qui dels pits surt la llet,
Per qui del foch ix lo fum.

Es del mon y dels cels rey,
Qui tot ho té dins sa ma:
Tot lo que vol ell, se fa,
Que tot quant vol es sa lley.

Al torn seù son tots los sants,
Y prop d'ell son los chors nou,
Y en un sol chor la veu se ou,
De sant, sant, sant, en fins canta.
etc. etc. etc.

III. (p. 112.)

ANGLO-SAXON INFLECTIONAL PARADIGMS.

THE ARTICLE.

Most grammarians agree that the Anglo-Saxon had neither definite nor indefinite article. Klipstein treats the declinable se, seó, þæt, and the indeclinable þe, both of which are generally considered properly pronouns, as definite articles, but he denies that there was an indefinite. In the early stages of the language, for example in Beowulf, the poems of Cædmon, and other ancient monuments, the nouns are commonly construed, as in Latin, without a determinative; but at later periods both se, seó, þæt, and þe, are employed as definite articles. But it is equally true that an, one, served as an indefinite, as in the second of the passages quoted from Ohther, in Illustration IV., *post*, an port, a harbour, and an mycel ea, a great river, Pauli's Alfred, p. 248, &c. We must therefore either admit both articles or reject both.

Se, seó, þæt, is thus inflected:

Singular.

	m.	*f.*	*n.*
N.	se	seó	þæt
G.	þæs	þæ're	þæs
D.	þám	þæ're	þám
A.	þone	þá	þæt.

Plural.

	m. f. n.
N.	þá
G.	þára
D.	þám
A.	þá.

NOUNS.

The following table shows the variable endings of the nouns in the different declensions.

SIMPLE ORDER.

First Declension.

Singular.

	Masc.	*Fem.*	*Neut.*
Nom.	-a	-e	-e
Gen.	-an	-an	-an
Dat. and Abl.	-an	-an	-an
Acc.	-an	-an	-e

Plural.

Nom. and Acc.	-an
Gen.	-ena
Dat. and Abl.	-um

COMPLEX ORDER.

	Second Declension.			*Third Declension.*		
	Singular.			*Singular.*		
	Masc.	*Fem.*	*Neut.*	*Masc.*	*Fem.*	*Neut.*
Nom.	-(-e)	—	—	-u	-u	-(-e)
Gen.	-es	-e	-es	-a	-e	-es
Dat. and Abl.	-e	-e	-e	-a	-e	-e
Acc.	-(e)	-e	—	-u	-e	-(-e)
	Plural.			*Plural.*		
Nom. and Acc.	-as	-a	—	-a	-a	-u
Gen.	-a	-a (-ena)	-a	-a	-a (-ena)	-a
Dat. and Abl.	-um	-um	-um	-um	-um	-um

ADJECTIVES.

Indefinite endings.

	Singular.			*Plural.*
	m.	*f.*	*n.*	*m. f. n.*
N.	—	—	—	-e (-u)
G.	-es	-re	-es	-ra
D.	-um	-re	-um	-um (-on, -an)
A.	-ne	-e	—	-e.

Definite endings.

	Singular.			*Plural.*
	m.	*f.*	*n.*	*m. f. n.*
N.	-a	-e	-e	-an
G.	-an	-an	-an	-ena
D.	-an	-an	-an	-um (-on, -an)
A.	-an	-an	-e	-an

COMPARISON.

The Comparative is formed from the Positive indefinite by annexing -ra for the masculine, -re for the feminine and neuter; the Superlative from the same by adding -ost or -est for the indefinite, and -esta for the masculine, -este for the feminine and neuter, definite form.

PRONOUNS.

First Person.

	Singular.	*Dual.*	*Plural.*
N.	ic	wit	we
G.	mín	uncer	úre
D.	me	unc	us
A.	me	unc	us.

Second Person.

	Singular.	*Dual.*	*Plural.*
N.	þú	git	ge
G.	þín	incer	eower
D.	þé	inc	eow
A.	þé	inc	eow.

Third Person.

	Singular.			*Plural.*
	m.	*f.*	*n.*	*m. f. n.*
N.	he	heó	hit	hí
G.	his	hire	his	hira
D.	him	hire	him	him
A.	hine	hí	hit	hi.

The Possessive Pronouns are the genitives of personal pronouns of the first and second persons, treated as nominative stem-forms, and declined like the indefinite adjective. There is no possessive pronoun of the third person, the genitive plural of the personal pronoun being used instead.

RELATIVE AND INTERROGATIVE PRONOUNS.

The parts of speech given under the head ARTICLE, declinable and indeclinable, are generally used as Relative Pronouns. The Interrogative is thus declined:

Singular.

	m. f.	*n.*
N.	hwá	hwæt
G.	hwæs	hwæs
D.	hwám	hwám
A.	hwone	hwæt.

VERBS.

There are several classes of verbs, both strong, or inflected by augmentation, and weak, or inflected by letter-change. A few examples of each must suffice.

SIMPLE ORDER, OR FIRST CONJUGATION.

INDICATIVE MODE.

Present.

	Class I.	Class II.	Class III.
Sing.	ic luf-ige	hýr-e	tell-e
	þú luf-ast	hýr-st	tel-st
	he luf-að	hýr-ð	tel-ð
Plur.	we, ge, hí luf-iað	hýr-að	tell-að

If, as in interrogative sentences, the pronoun follow the verb, the plural is luf-ige, hýr-e, tell-e.

Imperfect.

Sing.	ic luf-ode	hýr-de	teal-de
	þú luf-odest	hýr-dest	teal-dest
	he luf-ode	hýr-de	teal-de
Plur.	we, ge, hí luf-odon	hýr-don	teal-don

SUBJUNCTIVE MODE.

Present.

Sing.	luf-ige	hýr-e	tell-e
Plur.	luf-ion	hýr-on	tell-on.

Imperfect.

Sing.	luf-ode	hýr-de	teal-de
Plur.	luf-odon	hýr-don	teal-don.

IMPERATIVE MODE.

Sing.	luf-a	hýr	tel-e
Plur.	luf-iað luf-ige	hýr-að hýr-e	tell-að tell-e.

INFINITIVE MODE.

Pres.	luf-ian	hýr-an	tell-an
Gerund.	tó luf-igenne	tó hýr-enne	tó tell-anne
Part. Pres. and Active	luf-igende	hýr-ende	tell-ende
Part. Past and Passive	(ge-) luf-od	(ge-) hýr-ed	(ge-) teal-d.

COMPLEX ORDER, OR SECOND CONJUGATION.

INDICATIVE MODE.

Present.

	Class I.	Class II.	Class III.
Sing.	brece	healde	drage
	bricst	hyltst	drægst
	bricð	hylt (healt)	drægð
Plur.	brecað brece	healdað healde	dragað drage

Imperfect.

Sing.	bræc	heóld	dróh
	bræce	heólde	dróge
	bræc	heóld	dróh
Plur.	bræcon	heóldon	drógon.

SUBJUNCTIVE MODE.

Present.

Sing.	brece	healde	drage
Plur.	brecon	healdon	dragon

Imperfect.

Sing.	bræ'ce	heólde	dróge
Plur.	bræ'con	heóldon	drógon.

IMPERATIVE MODE.

Sing.	brec	heald	drag
Plur.	brecað brece	healdað healde	dragað drage.

INFINITIVE MODE.

Pres.	brecan	healdan	dragan
Gerund.	tó brecanne	tó healdanne	tó draganne
Part. Pres. and Active	brecende	healdende	dragende
Part. Past and Passive	(ge-) brocen	(ge-) healden	(ge-) dragen.

The perfect and pluperfect tenses are formed, as in the cognate Gothic languages and in modern English, by the verb habban, *to have*, used as an auxiliary with the past or passive participle.

There is no true passive voice; but, as in English, the place of the passive is supplied by the past or passive participle, with the substantive verb wesan, *to be*, as an auxiliary.

Wesan is thus conjugated:

INDICATIVE MODE.

Present	ic eom	*Imperfect.*	wæs
	pú eart		wære
	he is, ys		wæs
Plur.	we, gé, hí synd, syndon		wæron.

SUBJUNCTIVE MODE.

Present, s.	sý, síg, seó	*Imperfect, s.*	wære
Plur.	sýn	*Plur.*	wæron.

IMPERATIVE.

Sing.	wes	*Plur.*	wesað wese

Gerund.	tó wesanne
Part. Pres.	wesende
„ *Past*	(ge-) wesen.

The Anglo-Saxon verb has no future tense in either mode; the present being employed instead of a future. The present of the defective verb beón, *to be*, however, has frequently a distinct future signification, and thus serves as a future to wesan.

Beón is thus conjugated:

Indic. pres.	1. beó	*Subj. pres.*	beó
	2. býst	*Plur.*	beón
	3. býð	*Imper.*	beó
Plur.	{ beóð beó	*Plur.*	{ beóð beó

Infin. beón, *Ger.* tó beónne, *Part. pres.* beónde.

IV. (p. 112.)

EXTRACTS FROM OHTHER'S NARRATIVE, AND FROM ALFRED'S TRANSLATION OF BOETHIUS.

This narrative, which is introduced by King Alfred into his translation of Orosius, is interesting both as being, so far as style is concerned, probably Alfred's own work, and as containing the earliest authentic information we possess concerning the geography and the people of the countries it describes. In what language Ohther communicated with the king does not appear, but it was probably in the Old-Northern rather than in the Anglo-Saxon. We have reason to believe that the two speeches resembled each other sufficiently, in the ninth century, to be mutually intelligible to those using them, and there is evidence that the lays of the Northern bards who visited England were understood by at least the Saxon nobles.

I give: 1. the Anglo-Saxon text, from the appendix to Pauli's Life of Alfred. London, 1857; I have, however, to diminish the chances of typographical error, used the common English type instead of the Anglo-Saxon letter, so far as the alphabets correspond; 2. an English word-for-word version; 3. Thorpe's translation, in which, as will be seen by the notes, I have corrected an obvious error; 4. A French translation of Thorpe's version.

1.	Fela	spella	him	sædon	þa Beormas,	ægþer ge
2.	Many	things	him	told	the Beormas,	both
3.	The Beormas		told	him	many particulars,	both
4.	Les Beormas		lui	racontèrent	plusieurs détails,	tant

1. of hyra agenum lande. ge of þæm lande
2. of their own land and of the land
3. of their own land, and of the other lands
4. de leur propre pays, que des autres pays

1. þe ymb hy utan wæron. ac he nyste hwæt
2. that around them about were; but he wist-not what
3. lying around them; but he knew not what
4. qui les environnaient; mais il ne savait pas ce qui

1. þæs soðes wær. forþæm he hit sylf ne geseah:
2. (of-) the sooth was, for-that he it self not saw.
3. was true, because he did not see it himself.
4. était vrai, parce qu'il ne le voyait pas lui-même.

1. Ða Finnas him þuhte. and þa Beormas spræcon
2. The Finns him thought, and the Beormas spoke
3. It seemed to him that the Finns and the Beormas spoke
4. Il lui semblait que les Finois et les Beormas parlaient

1. neah an geðeode: Swiðost he for ðyder.
2. nigh one language. Chiefliest he fared thither,
3. nearly one language. He went thither chiefly,
4. à peu près un seul langage. Il y alla principalement,

1. to-eacan þæs landes sceawunge. for þæm
2. besides the land's seeing, for the
3. in addition to seeing the country, on account of the
4. non-seulement pour voir la contrée, mais à cause des

1. hors-hwælum, forþæm hi habbað swyðe æðele ban on
2. horse-whales, for-that they have very noble bones in
3. walrusses, because they have very noble bones in
4. morses, parce qu'ils ont de belles défenses à

1. hyra toðum. þa teð hy brohton sume
2. their teeth, these teeth they brought some
3. their teeth, some of these teeth they brought
4. leurs mâchoires, défenses dont ils portèrent quelques-unes

1. þæm cyninge. and hyra hyd bið swyðe god to
2. (to-) the king: and their hide is very good for
3. to the king: and their hides are very good for
4. au roi: et leurs peaux sont bonnes pour les

1. scip-rapum: Se hwæl bið miclé læssa
2. ship-ropes. This whale is much less
3. ship-ropes. This whale is much less
4. cordages des navires. Cette baleine est beaucoup plus petite

1. ðonne oðre hwalas. ne bið he lengra þonne syfan
2. than other whales, not is he longer than seven
3. than other whales, it being not longer than seven
4. que les autres baleines, n'étant pas plus longue que sept

1. elna lang. ac on his agnum lande is se betsta
2. ells long; but in his own land is the best
3. ells ; but in his own country is the best
4. aunes ; mais dans son propre pays il y a la meilleure

1. hwæl-huntað, þa beoð eahta and feowertiges elna
2. whale-hunting, they are eight and forty ells
3. whale-hunting, there they are eight-and-forty ells
4. chasse à la baleine, là elles ont quarante-huit aunes

1. lange. and þa mæstan fiftiges elna lange. þara
2. long, and the largest fifty ells long; (of-) these
3. long, and the largest fifty ells long; of these
4. de longueur, et les plus grandes en ont cinquante; de celles-ci

1. he sæde þæt he syxa sum ofsloge syxtig on
2. he said that he (of-) six some slew sixty in
3. he said that he and five others slew sixty in
4. il dit que lui et cinq autres en avaient tué soixante en

1. twam dagum: He was swyðe spedig man on þæm
2. two days. He was (a) very wealthy man in the
3. two days. He was a very wealthy man in those
4. deux jours. C'était un homme très-riche dans les

1. æhtum þe heora speda on beoð. þ is on
2. ownings that their wealth in is, that is in
3. possessions in which their wealth consists, that is in
4. biens qui constituent leurs richesses, c'est-à-dire en

1. wild-deorum: He hæfde þa-gyt. þa he þone cyningc sohte,
2. wild deer. He had yet, when he the king sought,
3. wild deer. He had at the time he came to the king,
4. cerfs sauvages. Il avait à l'époque où il vint vers le roi,

1. tamra deora unbebohtra syx hund:· : Ða deor hi hatað
2. (of-) tame deer unsold six hundred. These deer they hight
3. six hundred unsold tame deer. These deer they call
4. six cents cerfs apprivoisés invendus. Ils appellent ces cerfs

1. hranas. þara wæron syx stæl-hranas. ða
2. reins, (of-) them were six stale-reins, these
3. rein-deer, of which there were six decoy rein-deer, which
4. des rennes, parmi ceux-ci six étaient des rennes privés, qui

1. beoð swyðe dyre mid Finnum. forðæm
2. are very dear with (the) Finns, for-that
3. are very valuable amongst the Fins, because
4. ont une grande valeur chez les Finois, parce que

1. hy fod þa wildan hranas mid:·
2. they catch the wild reins with (them).
3. they catch the wild rein-deer with them.
4. par leur moyen ils prennent les rennes sauvages.

NOTES. *fela*, indeclinable adj. obsolete in English, but extant in Sc. feil;—*spella*, acc. pl. from *spell*, *tidings*, *information*, &c., obsolete in this sense, but extant in *spell*, a charm, the verb *to spell*, and the last syllable of *Gospel*;—*sædon*, 3. p. pl. imp. indic. from *secgan*, *seggan*, *sægan*, *to say*, or *tell*;—*ægþer ge—ge*, *both—and*, extant, as an alternative only, in *either*, not as a conjunctive. *Ægþer* is more generally used in the sense of *both* than *bá*, *bu*, *bátwá* (*bá*, *both*, *twá*, *two*), *buta*, *butu*, *butwa*, which are the etymological equivalents of *both*, or than *begen*;—*of*, *about*, *from*, *out of*, but never sign of possessive in Anglo-Saxon;—*hyra*, poss. pl. of the 3. p. of the personal pronoun. See p. 121;—*þæm*, dat. for more common form *þám*;—*ymb*, Ger. um, *about*, *around*, obsolete; *ac*,—*but*, obsolete. *Butan*, *bute*, exists in Anglo-Saxon as a conjunction, though seldom used. Alfred employs it in Boethius, c. xxxiv. § 10.;—*nyste*, 3. p. sing. imp. indic. from *nitan* or *nytan*, *not to know*, a negative verb formed by the coalescence of the particle *ne*, *not*, and *witan*, *to know*. The tendency to coalescent formations was carried further in Early English than in Anglo-Saxon. See First Series, Lecture XVIII.;—*þæs soðes*, *soðes* is the genitive of the noun *soð*, and the phrase nearly corresponds to the *of a truth*, of the scriptural dialect;—*þuhte*, 3. p. sing. imp. indic. from *þincan*, *to seem*, here used impersonally with the dative *him*, as, in the modern form, with the first person, *me-thought*;—*geðeode*,

language, obsolete;—*swiðost*, superlative, from *swiðe*, *very much*. The root is adj. *swið*, *swyð*, *strong*, *powerful*, *great*, which, with its twenty derivatives and compounds, is entirely obsolete. It is a singular instance of the mixture of vocabularies in English, that so common and so simple a native word should have been superseded by a borrowed root. *Very* is the Latin verum, French vrai, and was at first used in English as an adjective. Thus Chaucer, Wife of Bath's Tale:

> Thurgh which he may his *veray* frendes see;

to-eacan, extant in *eke*;—*sceawunge*, root extant in *show*, but with an objective meaning;—*hors-hwælum*, Icel. rosmhvalr, *walrus*;—*æðele*, Ger. edel, *noble*, *precious*, obsolete in English;—*mæstan*, nom. pl. superlative, definite, associate with *mycel*, *large*. Thorpe translates *þa mæstan*, '*the most of them*,' which is a strange oversight, for *mæst* is properly significative of quantity, not of number; and besides, this rendering is inconsistent with the context, because if the general length of the whole was forty-eight ells, 'the most of them' could not have been fifty ells long;—*spedig*, *prosperous*. Our modern verb *to speed* means, often, *to prosper*;—þ, contraction for *þæt*;—*hataðð*, we use *hight* only in a passive sense, but *hatan* like the Ger. heissen, meant both *to call* and *to be called*.

FROM THE SAME.

1.	Ohthere	sæde	þ	sio	scir	hatte	Halgoland	þe	he on
2.	Ohthere	said	that	the	shire	hight	Halgoland	that	he in
3.	Ohthere	said	that	the	shire	in which	he dwelt	is called	
4.	Ohthere	dit	que	le	comté	où	il demeurait	s'appelle	

1.	bude·.·	He	cwæð	þ	nan	man	ne	bude	be norðan
2.	dwelt.	He	said	that	no	man	not	dwelt	by north
3.	Halgoland.	He	said	that	no	one		dwelt	to the north
4.	Halgoland.	Il	dit	que		personne	n'habitait	plus	au nord

1.	him·.·	Ðonne	is	an	port	on	suðeweardum		þæm
2.	(of) him.	There	is	a	port	to	southwards	(of)	that
3.	of him.	There is likewise a			port	to the	south	of	that
4.	que lui.	Il y a		aussi	un	port	au	sud	de cette

1.	lande,	þone	man	hæt	Scyringes-heal.		þyðer	he	cwæð
2.	land,	which	men	hight	Scyringes-heal;		thither,	he	said,
3.	land,	which	is	called	Scyringes-heal;		thither,	he	said,
4.	contrée,	qui	est	appelé	Scyringes-heal;		à ce port,	dit-il,	

1. þ man ne mihte geseglian on anum monde, gyf man
2. that one not might sail in one month, if one
3. no one could sail in a month, if he
4. personne ne peut naviguer dans un mois, s'il

1. on niht wicode, and ælce dæge hæfde ambyrne wind.
2. by night lay-by, and each day had fair wind;
3. landed at night, and every day had a fair wind;
4. abordait de nuit, et que chaque jour il eût un vent favorable;

1. and ealle þa hwile he sceal seglian be lande. and on þæt
2. and all the while he should sail by (the) land, and on the
3. and all the while he would sail along the land, and on the
4. et tout le temps il cotoyerait la terre, et au

1. steorbord him bið ærest Iraland. and þonne þa
2. starboard (of) him will-be erst Iraland, and then the
3. starboard will first be Iraland, and then the
4. tribord il y aura premièrement Iraland, et ensuite les

1. igland þe synd betux Iralande. and þissum lande·.· Đonne
2. islands which are betwixt Iraland and this land. Then
3. islands which are between Iraland and this land. Then
4. îles qui sont entre Iraland et cette contrée. Ensuite

1. is þis land oð he cymð to Sciringes-heale, and
2. is this land till he cometh to Sciringes-heal, and
3. it is this land until he comes to Sciringes-heal, and
4. c'est cette contrée jusqu'à ce qu'il vienne à Sciringes-heal, et

1. ealne weg on þæt bæcbord Norðwege. wið suðan þone
2. all (the) way on the larboard, Norway. To south (of)
3. all the way on the larboard, Norway. To the south of
4. tout le trajet au babord, c'est la Norvége. Au sud de

1. Sciringes-heal fylð swyðe mycel sæ up in on þæt
2. Sciringes-heal runs(a) very great sea up into the
3. Sciringes-heal a very great sea runs up into the
4. Sciringes-heal une vaste mer s'avance dans la

1. land, seo is bradre þonne ænig man oferseon mæge.
2. land, which is broader than any man over-see may,
3. land, which is broader than any one can see over,
4. terre, qui est si large que personne ne peut voir de l'autre côté,

1. and is Gotland on oðre healfe ongean. and siðða Sillende.*
2. and is Gotland on(the) other side against, and then Seeland.
3. and Jutland is opposite on the other side, and then Seeland.
4. et Jutland est vis-à-vis de l'autre côté, et après Seelande.

1. Seo sæ lið mænig hund mila up in on þæt land.
2. This sea lieth many hundred miles up in that land.
3. This sea lies many miles up in that land.
4. Cette mer s'avance plusieurs milles dans ce pays.

1. and of Sciringes-heal he cwæð þ he seglode on fif dagan
2. And from Sciringes-heal he said that he sailed in five days
3. And from Sciringes-heal he said that he sailed in five days
4. Et de Sciringes-heal il dit qu'il navigua en cinq jours

1. to þæm porte þe mon hæt æt-Hæðum. se stent
2. to the port that men hight at-Heaths; this stands
3. to the port which is called Æt-Hæthum; which is
4. à ce port qui est appelé Æt-Hæthum; qui est

1. betuh Winedum and Seaxum. and Angle. and hyrð
2. betwixt (the) Wends and Saxons, and Angles, and belongs
3. between the Wends and Seaxons, and Angles, and belongs
4. situé entre les Wendes et les Saxons, et les Angles, et qui appartient

1. in on Dene.
2. to (the) Danes.
3. to Denmark.
4. au Danemarc.

NOTES. It will be observed that the construction of this passage conforms more nearly than that of the former to the English idiom. I make no attempt to solve the geographical difficulties it presents, but it is well to observe that some critics suppose that Iraland should be read Isaland or Island, *Iceland*, and that Gotland is not *Jutland*, as translated by Thorpe, but the island of *Gothland*. *bude* is still extant in the noun *booth*, and the last syllable of neigh*bour* is from the same root;—*cwæð*, from *cweðan* or *cwæðan*, is the modern *quoth*;—*an*, *one*, is the origin of the indefinite article *a*, *an*;—*port* is no doubt the Latin portus; —*wicode*, imp. indic. from *wician*. The root *wic* seems to have meant originally *an abiding or resting place*, *a station*. The Northmen, who depended principally on navigation for a livelihood, applied the corresponding Old-Northern *vík*, exclusively, to a bay or harbour of

refuge; the Anglo-Saxons, to any place of abode, as a town. This is the probable origin of the termination *-wich* in *Norwich*, &c. In this passage, *wicode* involves the notion of a bay, as a coaster could not lie-by without entering a harbour;—*ambyrne*, obsolete in English;—*ærest*, *erst*, superlative of *ær*, *ere*;—*bið*, from *beon*, to be, has here the force of a future;—*bæcbord*, now superseded by *larboard*. Richardson gives no earlier authority for this latter word than Raleigh. Babord, evidently identical with *bæcbord*, is found in most of the European languages, but no satisfactory etymology has been suggested for either word;—*þe man hæt æt-Hæðum*. This use of the dative, singular or plural, with a preposition, as the appellative of a town, is very common in Icelandic. The fact is important, because it shows that the derivation of the ending *-um* in the names of towns from Ger. *heim* is, in many cases, erroneous. See First Series, Lecture II. p. 44, and Appendix, 4. In the sagas, *æt-Hæðum* is generally called Heiðabær or Heiðabýr, in which forms the name often occurs in Knytlínga-Saga. In the present instance, the form is no doubt that which the Norwegian Ohther gave it, but this construction, though rare, appears not to be unprecedented in Anglo-Saxon, at least in the singular. Kemble, Cod. Dip. Æv. Sax. No. 353, as quoted for another purpose in Haupt's Zeitschrift, XII. 282., gives this phrase from a grant of Athelstan to Wulfgar: 'quandam telluris particulam in loco quem solicole ät Hamme vocitant;'—*hyrð*, 3. p. indic. pres. sing. from *hyran*, *to hear*, *to obey*, and hence, like the German *gehören*, to belong.

I have introduced a French translation made by a friend from Thorpe's version, for the purpose of a comparative view of the Anglo-Saxon, the English, and the French periodic construction. I think the latter might, without violence to the idiom of the language, have been made to show a closer conformity to Thorpe's syntax, but, though it was not executed with any such purpose, it will be apparent from a comparison of the different texts that English syntax corresponds almost as nearly with French as with Gothic precedent. I believe port and mil are the only words of Latin extraction used by Alfred in these extracts. Thorpe's translation, which studiously avoids non-Saxon words, has thirteen derived from French and Latin. About ten of the words employed by Alfred are now obsolete.

PREFACE TO ALFRED'S TRANSLATION OF BOETHIUS.

From Cardale's edition, London, 1829; with (2) a literal version; and (3) Cardale's translation.

1. Aelfred Kuning wæs wealhstod ðisse bec and
2. Alfred, king, was translator (of-) this book and
3. Alfred, king, was translator of this book and

1. hie of bec Ledene on Englisc wende swa hio nu is gedon.
2. it from book-leden into English turned as it now is done.
3. turned it from book-latin into English as it now is done.

1. hwilum he sette word be worde. hwilum andgit of
2. Whiles he set word by word, whiles sense for
3. Sometimes he set word by word, sometimes meaning of

1. andgite. swa swa he hit þa sweotolost and andgitfullicost
2. sense, just as he it the most-clearly and intelligibly
3. meaning, as he the most plainly and most clearly

1. gereccan mihte. for þæm mistlicum and manigfealdum weoruld
2. speak might, for the distracting and manifold world
3. could render it, for the various and manifold worldly

1. bisgum þe hine oft ægper ge on mode ge on lichoman
2. business which him oft both in mind and in body
3. occupations which often busied him both in mind and in body.

1. bisgodan. Ða bisgu us sint swiþe earfoþ rime
2. busied. The businesses us are very hard (to) count
3. The occupations are to us very difficult to be numbered

1. þe on his dagum on þa ricu becomon þe he
2. which in his days upon those realms came that he
3. which in his days came upon the kingdoms which he

1. underfangen hæfde, and þeah þa he þas boc
2. undertaken had, and yet when he this book
3. had undertaken, and nevertheless when he had learned

1. hæfde geleornode, and of Lædene to Engliscum
2. had learned, and from Latin into English
3. this book, and turned *it* from Latin into the

1. spelle gewende. þa geworhte he hi efter to leoþe.
2. speech turned, then wrought he it afterwards to (a) lay,
3. English language, he afterwards composed it in verse,

1. swa swa heo nu gedon is, and nu bit and for Godes
2. so as it now done is; and now prays and for God's
3. as it now is done. And *he* now prays and for God's

1. naman healsaþ ælcne þara ðe þas boc rædan lyste.
2. name begs each (of-) them that this book (to) read lists,
3. name implores every one of those whom it lists to read this book,

1. þ he for hine gebidde and him ne wite gif he
2. that he for him pray and him not blame if he
3. that he would pray for him and not blame him if he

1. hit rihtlicor ongite þonne he mihte. forþæmde ælc mon
2. it rightlier understand than he might; for that each man
3. more rightly understand it than he could. For every man

1. sceal be his andgites mæðe and
2. should by his understanding's measure and
3. must according to the measure of his understanding and

1. be his æmettan sprecan ðæt he sprecþ. and
2. by his leisure, speak that he speaketh, and
3. according to his leisure, speak that which he speaks, and

1. don þ þ he deþ.
2. do that that he doeth.
3. do that which he does.

NOTES. *wealhstod*, from *wealh*, *a foreigner*, *stranger*, *Welshman*. *stod* is apparently allied to *standan*, *to stand*, but its force in this compound is not clear. *Wealhstod* is wholly obsolete;—*bec-ledene*, *leden* is used for *Latin* and for *language*. See First Series, Appendix, 1. Chaucer uses *leden*, in this latter sense, in the Squieres Tale:

Right in hire haukes *leden* thus she sayde.

The phrase *bec-leden* belongs to a period when Anglo-Saxon was so rarely, and Latin so universally employed for literary purposes, that the latter was emphatically the language of books;—*wende* from *wendan*, *to turn*, obsolete in this sense, but surviving probably in *wend*, *to go*, and *went*, associate imp. of *go*;—*hwilum*, dative pl. from *hwil*, *hwile*,

a *while, time, space;*—*andgit, andgyt,* or *andget, mind, intelligence, meaning, physical sense,* wholly obsolete with its many derivatives and compounds. The moral and intellectual nomenclature of the Anglo-Saxon had become almost wholly lost before Chaucer's time, as will be shown in Lecture VIII. The substitution of Romance words for Gothic, or Anglo-Saxon, extended also very far in the vocabulary of common material life. Of the English names of the five senses, two, *taste* and *touch*, are Romance. See also First Series, Lecture VI. p. 139. Bosworth, under *andget*, quotes an Anglo-Saxon writer as saying: þa fif andgita þæs lichoman synd. *gesiht, hlyst, spræc, stæng* or *stenc*, and *hræpung;* the five senses of the body are *sight, hearing,* (*hlyst*, Engl. *listen*), *speech, smell,* and *touch.* Bosworth does not appear to suspect any error in this passage, but it is possible that *spræc, speech*, is a misreading for *smæc, taste*, still extant in *smack.* But this is by no means certain. In the Ancren Riwle, about A.D. 1200, it is said: þe heorte wardeins beoð þe vif wittes—sihðe & herunge, *spekunge* and smellunge, & eueriches limes uelunge; and we wulleð speken of alle, uor hwo se wit þeos wel, he deð Salomones heste. *The wardens of the heart are the five senses: sight and hearing,* speaking *and smell, and every limb's feeling, and we will speak of them all; for whosoever keeps these well, he doeth* Solomon's hest.* Another manuscript reads smecchinge for spekunge, and the learned editor of the Camden Society's edition of the Ancren Riwle thinks that, in the copy he printed from, spekunge is an error for smekunge. But the author of the Ancren Riwle, in discussing the temptations to which the indulgence of the senses exposes us, dilates first upon *sight*, then upon *speech*, thus prefacing his remarks on this subject: *Spellunge* & smecchunge beoð ine muðe boðe, ase sihðe is iðen † eien: auh we schulen leten *smecchunge* vort til we speken of ower mete. Talking *and taste are both in the mouth, as the sight is in the eyes: but we shall omit* taste *until we speak of your meat.* He then goes on to treat of *hearing*, then of *sight, speech* and *hearing*, jointly, concluding this section by saying: þis beoð nu þe þreo wittes þ ich habben ispeken of. Speke we nu schortliche of þe two oðre: þauh nis nout *spellunge* þe muðes wit, ase *smecchunge*, þauh heo beon beoðe ine muðe. *These are now the three senses that I have spoken of. Speak we now shortly of the other two; though* talking *is not a*

* *Doeth.* It is to be regretted that the false learning of grammarians has rejected the important distinction between *doth*, auxiliary, and *doeth*, independent.

† Note the curious coalescences, ine for *in the*, sing.; iðen for *in the*, (þæm) plur.

sense of the mouth as tasting *is, though they are both in the mouth.* He then proceeds to treat of *the smell* and of *the touch* or *feeling*, but makes no mention of *the taste*, though in the VIIIth and concluding part, he gives rules of abstinence. In the second paragraph of this part he says: Of sihðe and of *speche*, and of the oðre wittes is inouh i-seid; *Of sight, and of speech, and of the other senses enough has been said.* Notwithstanding the writer's protest, then, that '*talking* is not a sense of the mouth *as tasting* is,' yet he habitually treated *speech* as a sense. Of the five names of the senses enumerated in the passage cited by Bosworth under *andget*, *gesiht*, *sight* is the only one now used to indicate a sense, and *hræpung*, from *hræpan*, to touch, with all its cognates, is lost altogether.

There was a strange confusion in the use of the names of the senses in the Middle Ages. Chaucer's employment of *feel* for *smell* is an instance:

> I was so nigh, I might *fele*
> Of the bothum the swete odour.
>
> *Romaunt of the Rose*, v. 1844.

> Whan I so nigh me might *fele*
> Of the bothum the swete odour.
>
> *R. R.* v. 3012.

In the original, the verb is *sentir*, Lat. *sentire*, to perceive; *sentir* signifies *to smell* in modern French also;—*sweotolost*, adverb superl. from *sweotol*, *plain*, *clear*, which is obsolete, with all its progeny; *gereccan*, *recan*, *to speak*, extant only in *reckon*. Between *recan*, *to speak*, and *reckon*, *to count*, there is the same analogy as between the two corresponding senses of the verb *to tell*;—*for* has here nearly the meaning of *in spite of*, *notwithstanding*;—*mistlicum*, dat. pl. from *mistlic* or *mislic*, is not allied to *mix*, but is a compound from *mis* and *lic*, *mis-like*, *unlike*, *discordant*;—*lichoman*, *body*, obsolete except in the un-English *lyke-* or *like-wake*, *corpse-watch*;—*earfoþ*, obsolete;—*rime*, *number*, not the Græco-Latin rhythmus, is the true source of our *rhyme*. The resemblance between *rime* and Greek ἀριθμός in both form and meaning deserves notice;—*ricu*, *realm*, Ger. Reich, allied to *rich*, but otherwise obsolete;—*geworhte* × × *to leoþe*, *turned into a lay or verse*. This may, and probably does refer to the metrical, or rather rhythmical portions of Boethius, which Alfred translated into both prose and verse; but some have supposed that the whole version is to be considered as a species of measured composition.

It would be hard, however, to liken it to anything we call verse, unless it be Richter's Streckvers;—*healsaþ*, infin. *halsian*, from *hals*, *the neck*, *to implore*, *to persuade by embracing*. The root and all its derivatives are now obsolete in English;—*wite*, *blame*, allied to *twit*;—*mæðe*, *measure*, extant in verb, *to mete*;—*æmettan*, *leisure*, allied to *empty*. The Latin vacuus, the equivalent of *empty*, was used in the sense of *at leisure*.

In this preface, Alfred uses no Latin word. Cardale's translation has seventeen, of Latin and French derivation. Many of Alfred's most important words, as will be seen by the above notes, have entirely disappeared from the English vocabulary.

LECTURE IV.

SEMI-SAXON LITERATURE.

THAT which is sown is not quickened except it die. The decay of an old literature is a necessary condition precedent for the origination of a new mode of intellectual life, in any people which has a prose and a poetry of its own. Had not the speech of the Anglo-Saxons perished, and with it the forms of literary effort which employed it as a medium, the broader-spreading and more generous vine, which now refreshes the whole earth, had never sprung from the regenerated root of that old stock.

The Norman Conquest gave the finishing stroke to the effete commonwealth of which I spoke in a former lecture, and through the intellectual winter and spring-time of three centuries, which followed that event, the germ of a new and nobler nationality lay buried in the soil, undergoing the slow and almost imperceptible changes that were gradually fitting it for a vigorous and prolific growth.

During this period, the Saxon, the Norman, the Danish settler and the few remains of the Celt were slowly melting and coalescing into a harmonized whole, if not into a homogeneous mass, and thus a new nation, a new character, and a new social and political influence in the world of letters, of art and of arms, were gradually developed.

The immediate moral and intellectual results of the Conquest were fully realized, and the character of English intellect, taste and temper, so far at least as foreign action was concerned, was completely formed in the reign of Edward III.—the era of Langlande, and Chaucer, and Gower, and Wycliffe. The new

ingredients had been introduced and incorporated, and a unity of feeling and spirit established, before those great writers commenced their labours. In short, English nationality had become full-grown, and all that it remained for the Continent to do, in its capacity of an informing influence, was to furnish new additions to the stock of words at the command of the English writer, and models of literary form to serve as leading-strings for the first essays of an incipient literature.

In the history of Anglo-Norman England, we find comparatively few traces of that hostility of race which is so common between a conquered and a conquering people, and I think that recent English writers have exaggerated the reciprocal dislike and repugnance of the Norman and the Anglo-Saxon. A jealousy, indeed, existed—for the causes of it lie too deep in human nature to be eradicated—and there are not wanting evidences of its occasional manifestation; but the civil and social discords seem generally results of the conflicting interests and sympathies of ranks and classes, rather than of a settled animosity between the home-born and the comeling.

Down to the time of Edward III. the two languages, native and stranger, if not the two peoples, existed side by side, each forming a separate current in the common channel. Their intermingling was very gradual. Norman-French, which was the language of the schools, disturbed the inflections and the articulation of English, while English contributed no inconsiderable number of words to the vocabulary of Norman-French, modified its grammar in some particulars*, and thus created the dialect known as Anglo-Norman, which still survives in important literary remains, but is most familiarly known as, for a long period, the forensic and judicial language of England.

The Normans found in England as many objects and institutions new to themselves as they brought with them and

* For instance, it overthrew the Norman-French law of the formation of the plural in nouns.

imposed upon the English people. Hence, so long as the two dialects co-existed as independent speeches, the Norman, in its various applications and uses, borrowed as much as it gave; and accordingly, down at least to the accession of Edward III. we find in the French used in England, including the nomenclature of law and government, quite as large a proportion of Saxon words as contemporaneous English had borrowed from the Norman.

The entire English vocabulary of the thirteenth century, as far as it is known to us by its printed literature, consists, according to Coleridge's Glossarial Index, of about eight thousand words. Of these, only about one thousand, or between twelve and thirteen per cent., are of Latin and Romance derivation. In the actual usage of any single author, such words do not exceed four or five per cent., and of this small proportion, some were probably taken directly from Latin moral and theological literature, though in form they may have been accommodated to Norman modes of derivation. The language thus far was substantially Anglo-Saxon, but modified in its periodic structure, and stripped of a certain number of inflections, the loss of which was compensated by newly developed auxiliaries, and by a more liberal use of particles and determinatives.

Philologists have found it impossible to fix, on linguistic grounds, a period when Anglo-Saxon can be said to have ceased and English to have begun; and this is one of the reasons why some are disposed to deny that any such metamorphosis ever took place, and to maintain the identity of the old speech and the new. The change from the one to the other was so gradual, that if we take any quarter or even half of a century, it is not easy to point out any marked characteristic difference between the general language of the beginning and the end of it, though particular manuscripts of the same work, differing not very much in date, sometimes exhibit dialects in very different states of resolution and reconstruction. The difficulty of discriminating the successive phases of the language by a chronological arrange-

ment is much increased by the fact, that although there are numerous written monuments from every age of English history, yet there is, in the series of printed vernacular writings, almost a hiatus, which extends through a large part of the thirteenth century, or in other words through one of the most important eras of English philological revolution. Besides this, we are in many cases wholly unable to distinguish with certainty, or even with reasonable probability, dialectic or individual peculiarities from the landmarks of general change and progress; for notwithstanding the confidence with which critics assign particular writings to particular localities, upon internal evidence alone, we really know very little on the subject. In fact, in the present linguistic school, British as well as Continental, hastily generalized conclusions and positive assertion are so often substituted for sufficient documentary proof, that he, who studies the early philology of modern Europe only so far as it is exhibited in grammars and dictionaries, and speculative essays, is very frequent accumulating unsubstantial theories, instead of acquiring definite truths which can be shown to have ever had a real existence.

In ages, when a native literature has not yet been created, or the structural forms of language established by the authoritative example of great and generally circulated works of genius, there can be no standard of diction or of grammar. Most writers will be persons whose intellectual training has been acquired through older literatures and foreign tongues. Their first efforts will incline to be imitative, and they will follow alien models not only in theme and treatment, but even in grammatical composition. Every author will aim to be a philological reformer, and will adopt such system of orthography and of syntactical form and arrangement as accidental circumstances, or his own special tastes and habits of study, may have suggested to him. Hence no safe conclusions as to the common dialect of an age or country, at a period of linguistic transition, can be drawn from a single example, or from the consistent usage of a single

writer. No historically probable theory of progress and change can explain the remarkable grammatical differences between the older and the not much later text of Layamon, or between either of these and the nearly contemporaneous work of Ormin, because the intervening period is entirely too short for such revolutions to have been accomplished. And in like manner, even after the language had assumed the general character which now marks it, we find between the two texts of the Wycliffite translations of the Bible, or rather between Hereford's and Wycliffe's translation and the first recension of it, grammatical differences, which it would be extravagant to ascribe to a general change in English syntax during the very few years that are supposed to have elapsed between the execution of the first version and the revision of it by Purvey.

Although the process of transformation from Anglo-Saxon to English was too gradual and too obscure to admit of precise chronological determination, yet subsequent epochs of change in our vernacular, after it had once dropped the formal, or, to speak more accurately, the inflectional peculiarities of Anglo-Saxon grammar, are somewhat more distinctly marked, and it is practicable to indicate its successive periods by tolerably well characterised and easily recognisable tokens, though, as in the history of other languages, the dates assumed as the beginning and the end of those epochs are somewhat arbitrary. It is not, however, that the later growth of English has actually been more *per saltum* than at earlier periods, but because, from the increasing uniformity of the written dialect — a natural result of the general circulation of the works of distinguished authors, and the consequent universal prevalence of the forms which they had consecrated — and also from the much greater number of literary monuments which are historically known to have been produced in different parts of the island, we can trace the history of the language, and follow all its movements with far greater facility than through periods when contemporaneous

writers differed more widely and the philological memorials are fewer.

The London Philological Society, in its 'Proposal for the publication of a New English Dictionary,' divides English, for philological purposes, into three periods: the first, from its rise, about 1250, to the Reformation, of which the first printed English translation of the New Testament, in 1526, may be taken as the earliest monument; the second, from the Reformation to and including the time of Milton, or from 1526 to 1674, the date of Milton's death; and the third, from Milton to our own day.

These periods, I suppose, are fixed for lexicographical convenience in the collection of authorities, as I do not discover any other sufficient ground for the division. Neither is Craik's distribution altogether satisfactory. The first, or Early English period of that author extends from 1250 to 1350; his second, or Middle English, from the latter date to 1530; and his third, or Modern English, from the middle of the sixteenth century to the present day.* This, however, seems an objectionable division as to the second period, because it embraces, in one group, writers so unlike in literary and philological character as Langlande and Wyatt, Wycliffe and Sir Thomas More; and as to the last, because it overlooks the philological revolution due to the introduction of printing, the more general diffusion of classical literature, and the first impulse of the Reformation, and classes together writers who have so little in common as Sir Philip Sidney and Walter Scott. I attach very little importance to these arbitrary divisions of the annals of our language and literature, but having on a former occasion adopted an arrangement not coinciding with either of these systems, I shall, both for the sake of uniformity, and because I have found it at once convenient and suited to my views of English philological history, substantially adhere to it in this course.† The

* Outlines of the History of the English Language.

† See First Series, Lecture I., p. 48.

first period I would, with Craik, consider as extending from about the middle of the thirteenth to the middle of the fourteenth century; the second would terminate with the third quarter of the sixteenth century; the third would embrace all subsequent phases of both the language and the literature down to the time of Milton, with whom the second period of the Philological Society concludes. The question of subsequent division or subdivision is at present unimportant, because, for reasons already given, I do not propose to carry down my sketches later than to the age of Shakspeare, when I consider the language as having reached what in the geography of great rivers is called the *lower course**, and as having become a flowing sea capable of bearing to the ocean of time the mightiest argosies, a mirror clear enough to reflect the changeful hues of every sky, and give body and outline to the grandest forms which the human imagination has ever conceived.

The literature of England, were it to be considered without reference to the revolutions of its vehicle, might admit and perhaps require a division into very different eras. Some of these would commence with prominent and well-marked epochs of sudden transition, while in others, the periods are separated by an age of apparent intellectual inactivity, during which the monuments are too few and too insignificant to enable us easily to trace the course of those hidden influences, which were secretly and silently training and costuming the *dramatis personæ* for a new and more triumphant entry upon the stage of literature.

But we propose to consider the language and its literary productivity as co-ordinate powers, reciprocally stimulating and intensifying each other, and hence, so far as their history is not concurrent, we must distinguish their respective chronological

* In German, Unterlauf, or with some writers, Strom, is that lowest and usually navigable part of the course of a river, where its motion is due less to the inclination of its bed than to the momentum acquired by previous rapidity of flow, and to the hydrostatic pressure of the swifter currents from higher parts of its valley.

eras. I have already stated that the English language attained to a recognizable existence as a distinct individuality about the middle of the thirteenth century. We must now fix a period which is to be regarded as the birth-day of English literature.

When then can England be said to have first possessed a native and peculiar literature? The mere existence of numerous manuscripts, in the popular dialect, belonging to any given period, does not prove the existence of a national literature at that epoch. A national literature commences only when the genius of the people expresses itself, through native authors, upon topics of permanent interest, in the grammatical and rhetorical forms best suited to the essential character of the vernacular, and of those who speak it. It is under such circumstances only that prose or poetry exerts a visible influence upon the speech, the tastes or the opinions of a nation, only by concurrent action and re-action that literature and associate life begin to stimulate and modify each other. In order that such effects may be produced in a mixed people, the races which enter into the composition of the nation, and the dialects of those races, must have, to a considerable extent, been harmonized and melted into one, and the people and the speech, though ethnologically and historically derived from different and unallied sources, must have become so far amalgamated as to excite a feeling of conscious individuality of nature and community of interest in the population, and of oneness of substance and structure in the tongue.

In a composite nation, such a union of races and of tongues strange to each other, such a neutralization and, finally, assimilation of antagonist elements, can only be the effect of a gradual interfusion and a long commingling, or of some *vis ab extra* which forces the reciprocally repellent particles into that near contiguity when, as in the case of magnetic bodies, repulsion ceases and attraction begins.

The English political and other occasional ballads and songs of the thirteenth, the beginning of the fourteenth and probably earlier centuries, do not constitute a literature, nor would they

do so, were they ten times more numerous, because neither the public to which they were addressed, nor the speech in which they were penned, yet possessed any oneness of spirit or of dialectic form, and because they were founded on events too circumscribed in their action, and on interests too temporary in their nature, to appeal to the sympathies of more than a single class or province or generation.

These compositions were sometimes in Latin, sometimes in Norman-French, and sometimes in dialects of Saxon-English, which had lost all the power of poetic expression that characterized the ancient Anglican tongue, without having yet acquired anything of the graces of diction and adaptation to versified composition already developed in the neighbouring Romance languages; and lastly, they were sometimes macaronic. They cannot, therefore, be regarded as the expression of anything which deserves to be called the national mind, though, indeed, we trace in them, here and there, the germs which were soon to be quickened to a strong and genial growth.

The welding heat, which finally brought the constituents of English nationality into a consistent and coherent mass, was generated by the Continental wars of Edward III. The connection between those constituents had been hitherto a political aggregation, not a social union; they had formed a group of provinces and of races, not an entire and organized commonwealth. Up to this period, the Latin as the official language of the clergy, the Norman-French as that of the court, the nobility, and the multitude of associates, retainers, dependents, and tradesmen whom the Norman Conquest had brought over to the island, and the native English as the speech of the people of Saxon descent, had co-existed without much clashing interference, and without any powerfully active influence upon each other; and those who habitually spoke them, though apparently not violently hostile races, were, nevertheless, in their associations and their interests, almost as distinct and unrelated as the languages themselves.

There was, then, neither a national speech nor a national spirit, and of course there was and could be no national literature, until the latter half of the fourteenth century. True, the Ormulum, and the chronicles of Robert of Gloucester, and Robert of Brunne, voluminous works to be noticed hereafter, as well as many minor productions in the native language, existed earlier; but they were in no sense organic products of English genius, or stamped with any of the peculiarities which we now recognise as characteristic of the literature of England. We have no proof that any of these writings exerted much general influence in the formation of the English character or the English tongue, but they are important as evidences of the nature and amount of changes which political, social, and commercial causes, rather than higher intellectual impulses, had produced in the language and the people.

In one aspect, then, the general subject of our course properly begins with the age of Langlande and Wycliffe and Gower and Chaucer; but we propose to make a special study of the language, not merely as a passive medium of literary effort, but as an informing element in the character of that effort; and hence we must preface our more formal literary discussions with something more than a hasty glance at an era of blind and obscure influences — a stage of that organic, involuntary, and, so to speak, vegetal action by which the materials of our maternal tongue were assimilated, and its members fashioned, just as in animal physiology the powers of nature form the body and its organs before the breath of conscious life is breathed into them.

In investigating the origin of a literature and the relations between it and the tongue which is its vehicle, it is a matter of much interest to ascertain the causes which have determined the character of the language in its earliest individualised form; and we can, not unfrequently, detect the more general influences and their mode of operation, as certainly in the speech itself as in historical monuments. When, for example, we find, in follow-

ing the history of a given tongue, an infusion of new words or idioms of a particular linguistic character, we can generally recognize the source from which they proceeded, with little danger of mistake; and the class of words and combinations so borrowed will often furnish very satisfactory evidence as to the historical or ethnological character of the influences which have been operative in their introduction. If, for example, the vocabulary of trade, and especially of navigation, be foreign in its origin, there is a strong presumption that the people was not originally a commercial one, but that it possessed or elaborated natural products suited to the wants or the tastes of other nations, who were more addicted to traffic and foreign intercourse by sea or land — and that strangers have bestowed a mercantile nomenclature upon those to whom they resorted for purchase or exchange. If the dialect of war be of alien parentage, it is nearly certain that the people has, at some period of its existence, been reduced by conquest and subjected to the sway of another race, or at least that it has learned, by often repulsing foreign invasion, effectually to resist it. If the phraseology of law and of religion be not of native growth, we may be sure that the jurisprudence and the creed of the land have been imposed upon it by immigrant legislators and teachers.

In early Anglican linguistic and literary history, however, we are not left to infer the nature of the causes of change from their visible effects. The contemporaneous political and historical records and monuments — or rather the materials for the construction of such—are so numerous and so full, that though we are left much in the dark with reference to the social and domestic life of the Norman, and more especially the Saxon population, and to many grammatical changes, yet the general relations between the Anglo-Saxon people, the Romish missionaries who converted them to Christianity, the Northmen who plundered and for a brief period ruled over them, and the Norman-French who finally subdued them and gradually amal-

gamated with them, are well understood; and we can accordingly see in what way, though not always to what precise extent, each of these disturbing influences may have affected the speech of England.

The difficulty of measuring and apportioning the relative amount of effect produced by these different causes arises from the fact, that although they may sometimes have neutralized each other, they are frequently concurrent in their action, or fall in with already existing tendencies inherent, as some hold, in the Anglo-Saxon language, but more probably impressed upon it by circumstances common to all the nations which have participated in the influences of modern European civilization. There are many cases in which it is quite impracticable to determine to which of several possible causes a given effect is to be ascribed. With respect to these, we must content ourselves with a balance of probabilities; and as to those numerous philological data which can be historically connected with no known older fact, a simple statement of the phenomena is, for the present, better than the shrewdest guess at the rationale of them.

I shall have occasion to illustrate the Dark Age of English philological history, the thirteenth century, by more or less full references to many of its most important relics, but the attention of the student should be specially directed to the four most conspicuous monuments which serve to mark the progress of change from the Anglo-Saxon to the English. These are Layamon's Chronicle of Brutus, the Ancren Riwle, the Ormulum, and Robert of Gloucester's Chronicle. The dialect of the first three of these is generally called Semi-Saxon; that of the last Early-English, or simply, English. Excepting the Ancren Riwle, they are, unfortunately, all in verse. I say unfortunately, because in tracing the history of the fluctuations of language, prose writings are generally much more to be depended on than poetry. The dialect of poetry is, for rhetorical reasons, always more or less removed from the common speech, and the fetters of rhythm, metre, alliteration, and rhyme inevitably affect both

the choice of words and the employment of inflected forms.* The conventional canons of verse, and the habitual studies and training of poetical writers, tend to beget in them a deference to the authority of older models and an attachment to archaic modes of expression. Hence it follows that the vocabulary of poetry is usually in an earlier stage of development than that of contemporaneous prose, and especially of contemporaneous vernacular speech, and it is consequently rather behind than in advance of the language of common life, and of ordinary written communication. We cannot, therefore, suppose that either of the works to which I refer presents a true picture of the language in which Englishmen spoke and corresponded upon the moral and material events and interests of their time, at the several periods when they were written.

On the other hand, the diction of poetry is less subject to accidental and temporary disturbances than that of prose; its vocabulary and syntax usually conform more truly to the essential genius of the speech, and radical and abiding characteristics of language are more faithfully exhibited by it than by the dia-

* Van Maerlant, A. D. 1235—1300, in his *Leven van Franciscus*, quoted by Bosworth, says;

Ende, omdat ic Vlaminc ben,
Met goeder herte biddic hen,
Die dit Dietsche sullen lesen,
Dat si myns genadich wesen;
Ende lesen sire in somich woort,
Dat in her land es ongehoort,
Men moet om de rime souken
Misselike tonghe in bouken.

As translated by Bowring, *Batav. Anthol.* p. 25.

For I am Flemysh, I you besecche
Of youre courtesye, al and eche,
That shal thys Doche chaunce peruse;
Unto me nat youre grace refuse;
And yf ye fynden any worde
In youre countrey that ys unherde,
Thynketh that clerkys for her ryme
Taken an estrange worde sometyme.

Bosworth, *Origin of the Germ. and Scand. Lang.* p. 101. See First Series, Lecture VIII., p. 175, and XVII., p. 372.

lect of other forms of composition, which are more affected by the caprices or peculiarities of the individual, or by other contingent causes.

We shall, then, not widely err if we consider these works as examples, not indeed of the daily speech of their own times, but as following, at a considerable interval, the general movement of the English tongue, and, in the main, faithfully recording its greater mutations.

But, as has been before observed, there is reason to believe that the confusion of dialects was such during almost the whole of the three centuries next following the Norman Conquest, that no one could fairly lay claim to be considered as the standard of the national tongue. We have not the means of knowing how far either of the writings in question corresponded with some local modification of the common speech, or how far, on the contrary, it stands as a representative of the more general language of the land. Critical writers speak of particular works as marked by Northern, or Southern, or Western, or Northumbrian, or Anglian peculiarities; but these terms are, from our ignorance of the local extent of such peculiarities, necessarily used in a vague and loose application, and it would be very hazardous to suppose that they have any precise geographical or ethnological accuracy.

Of prose English compositions of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, we have not enough in print to enable us to compare the poetic and prose dialects of those periods, and our knowledge of actual speech in the vernacular of those centuries is extremely limited, our conclusions based upon uncertain premises. The Saxon Chronicle comes down to about the year 1150. The dialect of the latter portion of it approximates to English syntax, but it is generally considered as unequivocally Anglo-Saxon; and there are many fragments, in both prose and verse, of later periods, in which that language was still employed, others so confused in syntax, that it is very difficult to determine whether they are most closely related to the old language or to the new.

The following extract from the Saxon Chronicle will serve to show sufficiently the grammatical character of Anglo-Saxon at a period soon after the Conquest; for though it is not certain at what precise date it was written, it is evidently older than the chapters which contain the annals of the twelfth century.

Millesimo LXXXIII. On þisum geare aras seo ungeþwærnes on Glæstingabyrig betwyx þam abbode Durstane & his munecan. Ærest hit com of þæs abbotes unwisdome. þ he misbead his munecan on fela þingan. & pa munecas hit mændon lufelice to him. & beadon hine þ he sceolde healdan hi rihtlice. & lufian hi. & hi woldon him beon holde & gehyrsume. Ac se abbot nolde þæs naht. ac dyde heom yfele. & beheot heom wyrs. Anes dæges þe abbot eode into capitulan. & spræc uppon þa munecas. & wolde hi mistukian. & sende æfter læwede mannum. & hi comon into capitulan on uppon þa munecas full gewepnede. And þa wæron þa munecas swiðe áferede of heom. nyston hwet heom to donne wære. ac toscuton. sume urnon into cyrcan & belucan þa duran into heom. & hi ferdon æfter heom into þam mynstre. & woldon hig út dragan. þa þa hig ne dorsten ná ut gan. Ac reowlic þing þær gelamp on dæg. þ þa Frencisce men bræcen þone chór. & torfedon towærd þam weofode. þær þa munecas wæron. & sume of þam cnihtan ferdon uppon þone uppflore. & scotedon ádunweard mid árewan toweard þam haligdome. swa þ on þære rode. þe stod bufon þam weofode. sticodon on mænige arewan. & þa wreccan munecas lagon onbuton þam weofode. & sume crupon under. & gyrne cleopedon to Gode. his miltse biddende. þa þa hi ne mihton nane miltse æt mannum begytan. Hwæt magon we secgean. buton þ hi scotedon swiðe. & þa oðre þa dura bræcon þær adune. & eodon inn. & ofslogon sume þa munecas to deaðe. & mænige gewundedon þærinne. swa þ þet blod com of þam weofode uppon þam gradan. & of þam gradan on þa flore. Dreo þær wæron ofslagene to deaðe. & eahtateone gewundade.

By Thorpe's nearly literal translation of this passage, it will be seen that the construction of the period was rapidly approaching to the modern English arrangement. Keeping this in mind, the student will be able to compare the text and the translation by the aid of these observations.

Ungeþwærnes is from the adjective geþwær, or þwær, agreeing, consonant, pleasant, beyond which I can trace no radical, nor do I re-

member any probably cognate word in the Gothic languages. It is quite obsolete in English;—misbead is from misbeodan, comp. of the particle mis- and beodan, to *bid*, command or govern;—lufelice is an adverb from lufian, to love, meaning here, kindly, affectionately; —hold, faithful, gentle, now obsolete, but extant in the sister-tongues; —beheot is from behatan, to promise;—mistukian is a compound of mis- and tucian, to punish or discipline, obsolete in English, but still found in all the Gothic languages;—áfered of heom, afraid of them; áfered is a participle from áfæran, to put in fear; *afraid* is a corruption of it;—of is not a sign of the possessive, but means *by;*—toscuton is from sceótan, to shoot, rush, flee;— urnon, from yrnan, a transpositive form of rennan, to run; —belucan, from belúcan, to shut or lock, whence the English *lock;*—gelamp from gelimpan or limpian, to happen, now obsolete;—torfedon, from torfian, to throw or shoot, obsolete;—weofod, altar, said to be from wig, an idol, and bed, a resting-place, now obsolete;—rode from ród, cross, gallows, extant in rood-loft, Holy-rood, &c.;—gyrne, allied to the modern *yearn;*—miltse from mild, merciful, mild;—begytan, extant in get, beget;—eodon, imp. associate with gan, to go, obsolete in modern English, though still used in the fourteenth century;—sume þa munecas, some the monks. The modern form, some *of* the monks, is a foreign idiom;—gradan, from grad, a step, Lat. gradus. I have no doubt that *gree, gris*, a step, which occurs in so many forms in early English, and which some refer to a Celtic origin, is the same word, and that the Celts also took their term from the Latin.

Thorpe's translation is as follows:—

AN. MLXXXIII. In this year arose the discord at Glastonbury, betwixt the abbot Thurstân and his monks. It came first from the abbot's lack of wisdom, so that he misruled his monks in many things, and the monks meant it kindly to him, and prayed him that he would entreat them rightly, and love them, and they would be faithful to him, and obedient. But the abbot would naught of this, but did them evil, and threatened them worse. One day the abbot went into the chapter-house, and spake against the monks, and would misuse them, and sent after laymen, and they came into the chapter-house upon the monks full-armed. And then the monks were greatly afraid of them, knew not what they were to do, but fled in all directions: some ran into the church and locked the doors after them; and they went after them into the monastery, and would drag them out, as they durst not go out. But a rueful thing happened there on that day. The Frenchman broke

into the quire, and hurled towards the altar where the monks were; and some of the young ones went up on the upper floor, and kept shooting downward with arrows towards the sanctuary, so that in the rood that stood above the altar there stuck many arrows. And the wretched mónks lay about the altar, and some crept under, and earnestly cried to God, imploring his mercy, seeing that they might not obtain any mercy from men. What can we say, but that they shot cruelly, and the others brake down the doors there, and went in, and slew some of the monks to death, and wounded many therein, so that the blood came from the altar upon the steps, and from the steps on the floor. Three were there slain to death, and eighteen wounded.

Although this extract shows an approximation to the modern syntactical construction, which, as I have endeavoured to show in a former lecture, is in a considerable degree borrowed from the French, yet thus far the Saxon vocabulary had received very few contributions from that source. There is not a single French word in the whole passage, while Thorpe's translation contains fourteen, and eight of the Anglo-Saxon words of the original, with numerous compounds and derivatives from the same roots, have become entirely obsolete.

The work of Layamon, or perhaps *Lagamon*—for we do not know the sound of the ȝ in this name—is a versified chronicle of the early fabulous history of Britain and its ancient royal dynasty. It commences with the destruction of Troy and the flight of Æneas, from whom descended Brutus, the founder of the British monarchy, and extends to the reign of Athelstan. The authorities on which Layamon founds his narrative, as he himself states, are 'the English book that St. Beda made' (meaning probably King Alfred's Anglo-Saxon translation of Beda's Ecclesiastical History, from which however, he seems to have borrowed little), two writers, Albinus and Austin, who are not known to have produced any historical works,—though Bede acknowledges his obligations to the former for materials furnished him for the composition of his Ecclesiastical History of England; and lastly and chiefly, a third 'book, that a French clerk hight Wace made.' This latter work is the romance of Brut, trans-

lated by Wace or Gasse, into Norman-French, from Geoffrey of Monmouth's Latin History of the Britons, and completed, as appears by the concluding couplet of the poem, in the year 1155.

Layamon has enlarged upon his original, for the version of Wace contains but 15,300 lines, while Layamon's work extends to more than 32,000, though, as the lines in the latter are shorter than the octo-syllabic verse of Wace, the quantity of matter is not twice as great. Some unimportant passages of Wace are omitted, and much is added. The additions by Layamon are the finest parts of the work, almost the only part, in fact, which can be held to possess any poetical merit. We have not the means of ascertaining how far these are of Layamon's own invention, for he occasionally refers, in a vague way, to other 'books' as authorities for his narratives, and it is probable that many of the incidents were borrowed from older and now forgotten legends. In general, however, the work has more the air of an original than of a translation. It seldom conforms closely to the text of Wace, and it has a comparative elevation of diction, of thought, and of imagery, which entitles it to a higher rank than that work, and stamps it as a production of some literary merit.

The versification is irregular, sometimes unrhymed and alliterative, like that of the Anglo-Saxons, and sometimes rhymed like that of Wace; sometimes merely rhythmical, sometimes in lines composed of regular feet, thus showing, in the structure of the verse as well as in the syntax, evidences of Norman influence. The two systems of versification are intermixed, both occurring sometimes in a single couplet, and the employment of neither rests on any discoverable principle, except that of mere convenience to the writer. The rhymed lines bear but a small proportion to the alliterative, and in general the rhythm follows that of Anglo-Saxon models. It is remarkable that assonance, or correspondence of vowels while the consonants differ, elsewhere hardly known in English verse, is much used.

These remarkable discrepancies in versification suggest a doubt whether the chronicle of Layamon is to be regarded as an entire work, and not rather as the production of several different hands, whose labours have been collected and fashioned into a whole by later editors and copyists. But the plan has too much unity to render this supposition probable, and the lapse of time between the completion of Wace's poem and the date of the oldest manuscript of Layamon is too short to allow of a succession of independent translators. It is, however, by no means unlikely that Layamon availed himself of versions by earlier writers, who translated directly from Geoffrey of Monmouth, and this may serve in some degree to explain the want of uniformity in his verse.

There is neither internal nor external evidence by which the date of the poem can be fixed with exact precision, but there are allusions to events which occurred late in the twelfth century; and, on the other hand, the character of the diction and grammar justify us in saying that it could scarcely have been written after the commencement of the thirteenth.

It appears from the prologue, that Layamon resided at Ernley in North Worcestershire, and it is hence argued that the dialect in which he wrote was characteristic of that region. This is too slight evidence to establish a probability that he confined himself to the dialect of a shire, of which he may not have been a native and where his residence may have been short, and the external proof upon this point is not entitled to much consideration.

There exists a manuscript of Layamon, which appears to have been written about the beginning of the thirteenth century, and was therefore nearly contemporaneous with the author. In the want of evidence to the contrary, we are authorised to presume that this manuscript gives us the work substantially as Layamon wrote it. There is also extant a manuscript supposed to be only half a century, or thereabouts, younger. This exhibits differences too great to be explained upon the supposition of a

general change in the syntax of the language in so brief a period, and which moreover are not easily reconciled with any theory of the characteristics of local dialects. We must conclude, either that this manuscript belongs to a later period than that assigned to it by the critics, that the dialect of the older manuscript was much behind its time, or that there were two nearly contemporaneous dialects in more widely different states of progress, than we should infer from any other evidence.

The inflectional and syntactical character of Layamon I shall discuss in remarks upon the passages I cite by way of illustration, and I will here barely notice what is perhaps the most remarkable, though not the most important, peculiarity in the grammar of Layamon — the use of the possessive pronoun *his* as a sign of the possessive case, as when, in more modern English, it was not unusual to write *John his book*, instead of *John's book*. As I have somewhat fully examined this point in my former series of Lectures on the English Language, I will not now again enter upon it.*

Although the Chronicle of Layamon still retains a large proportion of the Anglo-Saxon inflectional forms, yet it approximates so closely to modern English in structure of period, that no previous grammatical study is required to read it. The glossarial index of the admirable edition published by Sir Frederic Madden in 1857, contains all the stem-forms and all the inflections, with references to the passages where they occur; so that, with this help and that of the notes, not to speak of the translation which accompanies the text, any person of ordinary intelligence may peruse it with entire ease and satisfaction.

The specimens I select for illustration of Layamon's diction and grammar are among his additions to Wace. The first consists of what Sir Frederic Madden calls: 'The amusing and dramatic passages relative to the Irish, and their conflict with the Britons.' The second and third are characterized by

* See First Series, Lecture XVIII., p. 401, and note at the end of the lecture.

the same editor as: 'the highly curious passage [s] regarding the fairy elves at Arthur's birth, and his transportation by them after death in a boat to Avalon, the abode of Argante, their queen.' They will not give the reader so high an opinion of Layamon's genius as some of his critics have entertained, and in fact his merits as a translator seem to be greater than his power as an original writer.

In the following examples, the first column exhibits the oldest known text, believed to be of Layamon's own time, or very near it; the second, as has been observed, is thought to have been written about half a century later. The points are prosodical, not marks of punctuation.

Þer iſah Gillomar ⁝	Þo i-ſeh Gillomar ⁝
Whar him com Vther.	war hī com Vther.
& hæhde hiſ cnihtes ⁝	and hehte his cnihtes ⁝
to wepne forð rihtes.	wepni heom forþrihteſ.
& heo to-biliue ⁝	And hii to-bliue ⁝
& gripen heore cniues.	neomen hire cniues,
& of mid here breches ⁝	
ſeolcuð weoren heore lecheſ.	
& igripen on heore hond ⁝	and gripen on hire honde ⁝
heore ſperen longe.	hire speres longe.
hengen an heore æxle ⁝	
mucle wi-æxe.	
Þa ſæide Gillomar þe king ⁝	Þo ſaide Gillomar þe king ⁝
a ſwiðe ſeollic þing.	a ſwiþe ſellich þing.
Her cumeð Vðer ⁝	Her comeþ Vther ⁝
Aurilies broder.	Aurelie his broþer.
he wule bidden mi grið ⁝	he wole bidde, min griþ ⁝
& noht ſehten me wið.	and noht ſihte me wiþ.
þa formeſte beoð hiſ ſweines ⁝	
farē we heom to-ȝeines.	
ne purſē ȝe nauere rehchen ⁝	
þah ȝe ſlæn þa wrecchen.	
For ȝif Vther Coſtantineſ ſune ⁝	And ȝef Vther Conſtantines ſone ⁝
wulle her mi mon bicume.	wole her mi man bi-come.
& Paſſente aȝeuen ⁝	
hiſ ſader richē.	

ich hine wullen griðien !	ich hine wolle gripie !
& latten hine liuien.	and lete hine libbe.
& inne fæire bēden !	and in faire bendes !
læden hine to mine londe.	him lede to mine londe.
þe king wordede þus !	þe kīg wordede þus !
þa while him a-lomp wurſ.	þe wile hit bi-fulle worſ.
Weoren Vtheres cnihtes !	Weren Vther his chnihtes !
at þan tune forð rihtes.	in þan toune forprihtes.
leiden fur a þene tun !	and ſetten fur oueral !
& fehten biliue.	in bour and in hal.
mid ſweorden heom to rakeden !	and faſte to ȝam rakede !
and þa Iriſce weoren nakede.	and hii were alle nakede.
Þa iſeȝen Iriſce mē !	Þo i-ſehȝe Yriſſe men !
þat Brutten wes an eorneſt.	
ſeondliche heo ſuht !	
and neoðeles heo ſeollen.	þat hii þuſſe fullen.
heo cleopedē on heore king !	hii gradde to hire king !
Whar ært þu niðing.	War hart þou niþing.
whi nult þu hider wenden !	wi nelt þou hider wende !
þu lezſt uſ her ſcenden.	þou leteſt vs alle aſende.
and Paſſent þin iȝere !	
iſih us fallen here.	
cumeð us to halpe !	
mid hahȝere ſtrengðe.	
þiſ iherde Gillomar !	þis ihorde Gillomar !
þer foren wes hiſ heorte ſær.	þar vore his heort was ſor.
mid hiſ Iriſce cnihten !	mid his Yreſſe cnihtes !
he com to þan ſihte.	he com to þan ſihte.
and Paſſend vorð mid him !	and Paſcent forþ mid him !
beien heo weoren uæie.	beine hii weren veie.
Þa iſeh Vðer !	Þo iſeh Vther !
þat icumen wes þer Gillomar.	þat icome was Gillomar.
to him he gon riden !	to him he gan ride !
and ſmat hine i þere ſide.	and ſmot hī in þan ſide.
þat þat ſpere þurh rade !	þat þe ſpere þorh-rod !
& þa heorte to-glad.	and þe heorte to-glod.
Hiȝendliche he hine biwet !	Hiȝenliche he hine bi-went !
& of-toc Paſſent.	of-tock he ſone Paſcent.
and þas word sæide !	and þeos word ſaide !
Vther þe ſele.	Vther þe ſæle.
Paſſent þu ſcalt abiden !	Paſcent wi nelt abide !

her cumeð Vther riden.	her comeþ Vther ride.
He ſmat hine uuenen þat hæued:	Hc ſmot hine ouenon þat heued:
þat he adun halde.	þat he ful to pan grunde.
and þat ſweord putte in his muð:	and þat ſweord put in his muþ:
swulc mete him wes uncuð.	ſoch mete him was oncouþ.
þat þe ord of þan sworde:	þat þe ord of þe ſweord:
wod in þere eorðe.	wond in þan eorþe.
Þa ſæide Vther:	Þo ſaide Vther:
Paſſent liȝ nu þer.	Paſcent lý nou þar.
nu þu haueſt Brutlond:	nou þou haueſt Brutlond:
al bi-tald to þire hond.	al awonne to þin hond.
Swa þe if nu iræd:	
þer on þu ært ded.	
wikien ȝe ſcullen here:	wonieþ nou here:
þu and Gillomar þin iſere.	þou an Gillomare.
& brukeð wel Brutlōd:	and broukeþ wel Brutlond:
for nu ic hit bitæche inc an hond.	for nou ȝe hit habbeþ an hond.
þat ȝit maȝen to-ȝere:	
mid uſ wunien here.	
ne purue ȝe nauere adrede:	ne þerh he noht drede:
wha eou ſcullen feden.	þat ȝou ſal feode.
Þuſ ſæide Vder:	
and seoððe he arnde þer.	
and drof Iriſce men:	
ȝeond wateres and ȝeond fenes.	
and ſloh al þa uerde:	
þe mid Paſſent commen to ærde.	
Summe to þere sæ iwiten:	
& leoppen in heore ſcipen.	
mid wederen & mid wateren:	
þær heo forferden.	
Þuſ heo iſpædden her:	Þus i-ſped here:
Paſſent and Gillomar.	Paſcent and Gillomare.

Layamon, II. pp. 332—336.

The next specimen is from vol. ii. pp. 384, 385.

Þe time cō þe wes icoren:	Þe týme com þat was icore:
þa wes Arður iboren.	þo was Arþur ibore.
Sone ſwa he com an eorðe:	Sone ſo he to worle com:
aluen hine iuengen.	aluene him onderfenge.

heo bigolen þat child:	
mid galdere ſwiðe ſtronge.	
heo ȝeuē him mihte:	and ȝeuen him mihte:
to beon bezſt alre cnihten.	to beon beſt alre cnihte.
heo ȝeuen him an oðer þing:	hii ȝeuen him an oþer þing:
þat he ſcolde beon riche king.	þat he ſolde beo riche king.
heo ȝiuen hī þat þridde:	hii ȝeuen him þat pridde:
þat he scolde longe libben.	þat he ſolde lange libbe.
heo ȝiſen him þat kine-bern:	hii ȝeuen þane beorn:
cuſten ſwiðe gode.	ȝeſtes ſwiþe gode.
þat he wes mete-cuſti:	þat he wes mete-cuſti:
of alle quikemonnen.	of alle cwike manne.
þis þe alue him ȝef:	þis þe alfe him ȝeaf:
and al ſwa þat child iþæh.	and al ſo þat child i-þeh.

The following passage is from vol. iii. pp. 142—146.

Þer wes Modred of-slaȝe:	Þar was Modred of-ſlaȝe:
and idon of lif-daȝe.	and idon of lif-daȝe.
* * * * *	and alle his cnihtes:
in þan ſihte.	iſlaȝe in þan ſihte.
Þer weoren of-ſlaȝe:	Þar weren of-ſlaȝe:
alle þa ſnelle.	alle þe ſnelle.
Ardureſ hered-men:	Arthures hiredmen:
heȝe.	hehȝe and lowe.
and þa Bruttef alle:	and þe Bruttes alle:
of Arðureſ borde.	of Arthur his borde.
and alle hiſ foſterlīges:	and alle hi. foſterlin..s:
of feole kinericheſ.	of ..... ne riche.
And Arður forwunded:	And ..... him seolf for-w.....
mid wal-ſpere brade.	mid one ſpere brode.
fiftene he hafde:	... tene he hadde:
feondliche wunden.	feond .. che wond..
mon mihte i þare laſten:	man mihte in þan leaſte:
twa glouen iþraſte.	two gloues þreaſte.
Þa naſ per na mare:	Þo naſ þar na more:
i þan ſehte to laue.	ileued in þan fihte.
of twa hundred þusend monnen:	of two hundred þousend manne:
þa þer leien to-hauwē.	þat þar laý to-hewe.
buten Arður þe king ane:	bote Arthur þe king:
& of hiſ cnihteſ tweien.	and twei of hiſ cnihtes.

Arður wes for-wunded ⁝	Arthur was for-wonded ⁝
wunder ane ſwiðe.	wonderliche ſwiþe.
þer to him com a cnaue ⁝	þar com a ȝong cnaue ⁝
þe wes of hiſ cunne.	þat was of his cunne.
he weſ Cadoreſ ſune ⁝	he was Cador his ſone ⁝
þe eorleſ of Corwaile.	eorl of Cornwale.
Conſtantin hehte þe cnaue ⁝	Conſtantin he hehte ⁝
he weſ þan kinge deore.	þe king hine louede.
Arður him lokede on ⁝	Þe king to him bi-heold ⁝
þer he lai on folden.	
and þas word ſeide ⁝	and þeos word ſaide.
mid sorhfulle heorte.	
Coſtætin þu art wilcume ⁝	Constantin þou hart wilcome ⁝
þu weore Cadoreſ ſone.	þou were Cador..s ſ.ne.
ich þe bitache here ⁝	ich þe bi-take here ⁝
mine kineriche.	mine kineriche.
and wite mine Bruttef ⁝	and wite mine Bruttus ⁝
a to þineſ lifeſ.	wel bi þine liue.
and hald heom alle þa laȝen ⁝	
þa habbeoð iſtonden a mine daȝen.	
and alle þa lagen gode ⁝	
þa bi Vðeref daȝen ſtode.	
And ich wulle uaren to Aualū ⁝	And ich wolle wende to Auelun ⁝
to uaireſt alre maidene.	
to Argante þere quene ⁝	to Argant þare cweane.
aluen ſwiðe ſceone.	
& heo ſlal mine wunden ⁝	and ȝeo fal mine wondes ⁝
makien alle iſunde.	ma..... al iſunde.
al hal me makien ⁝	al ... .ie ⁝
mid haleweiȝe drēchen.	mid halewei.. .....
And ſeoðe ich cumen wulle ⁝	.nd ſuþþe ich .... .ȝen ⁝
to mine kineriche.	to mine .....
and wunien mid Brutten ⁝	
mid muchelere wunne.	
Æfne þan worden ⁝	Eafne þan ....
per com of ſe wenden.	..r com of ſéé wende.
þat wes an sceort bat liðen ⁝	a lu... fort bot ⁝
ſceouen mid vðen.	wandri mid þ.. beres.
and twa wimmē þer inne ⁝	and two wimm.. ...ine ⁝
wunderliche idihte.	wonderliche igýnned.
and heo nomen Arður anā ⁝	... .men Arthur anon ⁝

and aneouſte hine uereden.	an. ..þan bote bere.
and ſofte hine adun leiden ⁝	and hine ſoht. .dun leýde ⁝
& forð gunnen hine liðen.	and forþ ...gan wende.
Þa weſ hit iwurðen ⁝	Þo was... ..onde ⁝
þat M'lin ſeide whilen.	þat Merlýn ſaide wile.
þat weore unimete care ⁝	þat ſolde beon mochel care ⁝
of Arðureſ forð-ſare.	after Arthures forþ-ſare.
Bruttef ileueð ȝete ⁝	Brutt.. ileueþ ȝete ⁝
þat he bon on liue.	þat ha be. on liue.
and wunnien in Aualun ⁝	and w.nie in Auailun ⁝
mid ſaireſt alre aluen.	mid .... eſte alre cwene.
and lokieð euere Butteſ ȝete	
whan Arður cumē liðe.	
Niſ nauer þe mon iborē ⁝	Nas neuere þe man ibore ⁝
of nauer nane burde icoren.	ne of womman icore.
þe cunne of þan ſoðe ⁝	þat conne of þan ſoþe ⁝
of Arðure ſugen mare.	of Arthur ſegge more.
Bute while weſ an witeȝe ⁝	Bote wile was a witti ⁝
Mærlin ihate.	Merlin ihote.
he bodede mid worde ⁝	he ſaide mid wordes ⁝
hiſ quideſ weoren ſoðe.	his ſaȝeſ were ſoþe.
þat an Arður ſculde ȝete ⁝	þat Arthur ſolde ȝite ⁝
cum Anglen to fulſte.	come Bruttef ... for to healpe.

In the nouns, the earlier text shows a gradual, not an abrupt, departure from the Anglo-Saxon inflectional system, the later copy a much wider divergence, and a confusion of forms which is more embarrassing to the syntax than the dropping of the case-endings altogether would have been. The most obvious changes in the inflections and construction of nouns are that in both texts the plural in *s* is very freely used, and that, in the later, the preposition *of* is employed with the genitive, or, with a stem-form of the noun, as a sign of the genitive.

In the adjective, the distinction between the definite and indefinite forms is generally observed, though not unfrequently neglected.

The personal pronouns are, in the main, substantially the same as in Anglo-Saxon, but the dual form of none of them occurs in the later text.

The conjugation of the verb in most points resembles the inflection of the same part of speech in Anglo-Saxon, but the infinitive, which in the later text drops the characteristic *n*, commonly takes the preposition *to*, and the gerund is, not unfrequently, confounded with the infinitive on one side, and the active participle in *-nde* on the other. The plural verb indicative present has generally the ending *-eð*, except when the pronoun of the *first* or *second* person follows its verb, in which case it ends in *-e*, or sometimes in *-en*.

Some instances of the confounding of the active participle with the verbal noun in *-inge* are met with, but these are rare, and in fact the participle is not of frequent occurrence in either text. But perhaps the most important novelty in Layamon's construction of the verb is the regular employment of *will* and *shall* as technical auxiliaries. In both texts, as will be seen by the extracts, they are used almost precisely as in modern English, and indeed with a closer conformity to the present practice than is found in many works of even as late a date as the fourteenth century.

These are the general characteristics of Layamon's syntax, but there are certain specific points in the diction and grammar of the passages above quoted which merit more particular notice.

In the first extract:

to-biliue, quickly, in a lively manner, common in old English, but now obsolete;—seolcuð, sel-couth, seldom known, strange, obsolete; —wi-æxe, battle-axe, from wig, war, obsolete;—swiðe, very, obsolete;—seollic, obsolete, at least in this sense, though probably allied to A.-S. gesælig, prosperous, and to the modern *silly*;—grið, peace, obsolete;—formeste, foremost. This word is often used in the sense of *first*, and is, probably, etymologically identical with it;—þurfen, obsolete, but perhaps allied to *dare*. The two words coincide in some of the Gothic languages;—richen, realm, obsolete, though allied to *rich*;—griðien, to spare, pardon, make peace with, obsolete;—wordede, imp. This verb does not occur in Anglo-Saxon, nor is it found in the Ancren Riwle, in the Ormulum, or in Coleridge's Glossa-

rial Index. It seems to be a coinage of Layamon's which failed to obtain circulation, though it has been revived in later ages as a participial adjective, and even as a verb;—a-lomp, imp. from a-limpian, to happen, obsolete;—to-rakeden, from raken, to rush, obsolete;—feondliche, with fury or hate, from feond, an enemy, whence *fiend*, obsolete;—niðing, Icel. níðíngr, craven, obsolete;—scenden, to disgrace, to destroy, obsolete;—ifere, companion, obsolete;—uæie, fated, Sc. fey, obsolete. Fatatus is used in mediæval Latin, and fæge is found, though rarely, in Anglo-Saxon. Historically, uæie, as well as A.-S. fæge, doubtless comes from Icel. feigr, fated, which does not seem to be in any way allied to fatum;—sele, good, obsolete;—riden, her cumeð Vther riden, ridden, ridingly. Riden is here not the active, but the passive participle, in analogy with the German, er kommt geritten. See Lecture II., Illustration II;—halde, imp. from hælden, halden, to sink or fall, obsolete, except, perhaps, in the nautical term *to heel;*—uncud, unknown, extant in *uncouth*, in a different, but derivative sense;—ord, point, obsolete;—wod, went, obsolete;—bi-tald, from bi-tellen, to win or prove, obsolete, unless we suppose it to be the modern verb *tell*, so that bi-tald would mean *told-off*, counted, and hence, delivered;—iræd, happened, obsolete;—wikien, to dwell, obsolete;—brukeþ, from bruken, to use, obsolete;—inc, dual, you two, obsolete;—arnde, imp. from urnen, transpositive form of A.-S. rennan, to run. In the Glossarial Notes, however, Sir F. Madden expresses the opinion that arnde is from ærnan, a causative form of urnen, signifying to ride;—uerde, ferde, host, army, obsolete;—iwiten, from i-witen, to flee, perish, obsolete;—

In the second extract:

icoren, chosen, obsolete;—iuengen, part. from fengen, to take, obsolete;—bigolen, enchanted, obsolete;—galdere, magic, obsolete;—kine-bern, child, obsolete;—custen, gifts, conditions, obsolete, but perhaps allied to choose;—mete-custi, liberal, or rather hospitable. Sir F. Madden ascribes no special force to mete in this compound, but, as in the corresponding Icelandic matarmíldr, matargóðr, matgóðr, it means *meat*, and the signification is, generous of food, hospitable. It is obsolete;—i-þæh, imp. from iþeon, to thrive, obsolete;—

In the third extract:

snelle, active, brave, obsolete,—hered-men, attendants, courtiers, retainers, from A.-S. hired, hyred, a family, a royal court. The

compound *hired-man*, so common in America, though more probably a new word from the verb *to hire* and *man*, may, possibly, have come down from the A.-S. hired-man, Icel. hirð-maðr. The word is otherwise obsolete;—feole, Icel. feil, many, obsolete;—wal-spere, from wal, wæl, carnage, death, a dead body, and spere, spear. Wal, in Icel. valr, is the first element in Valkyria, chooser of the slain. Wal is obsolete;—cnihtes, Ger. knecht, *knights*, soldiers;—cnaue, Ger. knabe, boy, servant, *knave;*—cunne, dat. of cun, kin;—folden, ground, obsolete, unless possibly extant in *fallow;*—bitache, commit, deliver. *Take* often has this sense in old English;—wite, govern, rule, obsolete;—slal, error of scribe for scal;—hale-weiȝe, balsam. Madden thinks this word is from hæl, healing, and hwæg, whey. It is obsolete;—drenchen, a causative from drinchen, to drink. At least this is quite as probable as that it means to bathe. The noun drench is still used in an analogous sense. Seoðe, sithen, since;—wunien, to dwell, Ger. wohnen, obsolete in this sense, but extant in *wont*, *wonted;*—wunne, bliss, Ger. Wonne, obsolete;—vðen, waves, obsolete;—nomen, imp. from nimen, to take;—aneouste, quickly, from A.-S. neah, near, obsolete;—gunnen, from gon, gan, old Engl. *gan*, often used as an auxiliary to form the past tense;—liðen, to go or come, obsolete;—iwurðen, Ger. geworden, come to pass, used in old English, but now obsolete;—unimete, immeasurable, extant in *unmeet;*—ileueð, believe;—burde, woman, extant in *bride;*—witeȝe, A.-S. witega, prophet, sage, from witan, to know, obsolete;—bodede, from bodien, to say;—quiðes, words, allied to *quoth;*—fulste, fulsten, aid, obsolete.

In the orthography, the remarkable change from *hw*, initial, to *wh* occurs. There are a few examples of this transposition in earlier manuscripts, but I believe it was not regularly used by any writer before the time of Layamon.

In the above extracts no word of Latin or French etymology occurs, unless we adopt the improbable supposition that care, A.-S. caru, cearu, is from the Latin cura. Madden's translation contains twenty Latin and French words, exclusive of repetitions. At least fifty of the words employed by Layamon in these few verses are wholly obsolete.

Sir F. Madden's translation of these passages is subjoined. Words and phrases included in quotation-marks are in the

earlier, but not in the later text; words in brackets are the variations of the later text.

First extract:

There [Then] saw Gillomar where Uther came to him, and commanded his knights to weapon [them] forth-right. And they very speedily grasped [took] their knives; 'and off with their breeches—strange were their looks,'—and grasped in their hands their long spears, '*and* hung on their shoulders great battle-axes.' Then said Gillomar the king a thing very strange:—"Here cometh Uther, Aurelies [Aurelie his] brother; he will ask my peace, and not fight with me. 'The foremost are his swains; march me against them; ye need never reck, though ye slay the wretches!' For [And] if Uther, Constantines son, will here become my man, 'and give to Pascent his fathers realm,' I will him grant peace, and let him live, and in fair bonds lead him to my land." The king spake thus, the while worse him [it] befell! Uthers [Uther his] knights were in the town forth-right, [and] laid [set] fire in the town, and fought sharply; with swords [over all, in bower and in hall, and fast] rushed *towards* them; and the Irish [they] were [all] naked. When *the* Irish men saw, that '*the* Britons were in conflict, they fought fiercely, and' nevertheless [thus] they fell; they called on [to] their king: "Where art thou, nithing! why wilt thou not come hither? thou lettest us here [all] be destroyed;—'and Pascent, thy comrade, saw us fall here;—come *ye* to us to help, with great strength!'" Gillomar heard this; therefore his heart was sore; with his Irish knights he came to the fight, and Pascent forth with him—both they were fated! When Uther saw, that Gillomar was 'there' come, to him he gan ride, and smote him in the side, *so* that the spear through pierced, and glided to the heart. Hastily he passed by him, and [he soon] overtook Pascent; and said these words Uther the good: "Pascent, thou shalt [why wilt thou not] abide; here cometh Uther riding!" He smote him upon the head, *so* that he fell down [to the ground], and the sword put in his mouth—such meat to him was strange,—*so* that the point of the sword went in the earth. Then said Uther: "Pascent, lie now there; now thou hast Britain all won to thy hand! 'So is now hap to the; therein thou art dead;' dwell ye shall [now] here, thou, and Gillomar 'thy companion,' and possess well Britain! For now I deliver it to you [ye it have] in hand, '*so* that ye may presently dwell with us here;' ye need not 'ever' dread who you shall feed!" 'Thus said Uther, and afterwards he there ran, and drove *the* Irish men over waters and over fens, and slew all the host that with

Pascent came to land. Some to the sea fled, and leapt into their ships; with weather and with water there they perished!' Thus they 'sped' here, Pascent and Gillomar.

Second extract:

The time came that was chosen, then was Arthur born. *So* soon as he came on earth [in *the* world], elves took [received] him; 'they enchanted the child with magic most strong,' they [and] gave him might to be the best of all knights; they gave him another thing, that he should be *a* rich king; they gave him the third, that he should live long; they gave to him the prince [the child] virtues [gifts] most good, *so* that he was *most* generous of all men alive. This the elves gave him, and thus the child thrived.

Third extract:

There were slain all the brave, Arthurs warriors, high and low, and all the Britons of Arthurs [Arthur his] board, and all his dependants, of many kingdoms [a kingdom]. And Arthur [himself] wounded with [a] broad 'slaughter-'spear; fifteen dreadful wounds he had; in the least one might thrust two gloves! Then was there no more remained in the fight, of two hundred thousand men that there lay hewed in pieces, except Arthur the king 'alone,' and two of his knights. Arthur was wounded wondrously much. There came 'to him' a [young] lad, who was of his kindred; he was Cadors [Cador his] son 'the' earl of Cornwall; Constantine the lad [he] hight, he was dear to the king [the king him loved]. Arthur looked on [The king beheld] him, 'where he lay on *the* ground,' and said these words, 'with sorrowful heart': "Constantine, thou art welcome; thou wert Cadors [Cador his] son. I give thee here my kingdom, and defend *thou* my Britons ever in [well by] thy life, 'and maintain them all the laws that have stood in my days, and all the good laws that in Uthers days stood.' And I will fare to Avalun, 'to *the* fairest of all maidens,' to Argante the queen, '*an* elf most fair,' and she shall make my wounds all sound; make me all whole with healing draughts. And afterwards I will come [again] to my kingdom, 'and dwell with *the* Britons with mickle joy'." Even with the words there approached from *the* sea 'that was' a [little] short boat, floating with the waves; and two women therein, wondrously formed; and they took Arthur anon, and bare him quickly [to the boat], and laid him softly down, and forth they gan depart. Then was it accomplished that Merlin whilom said, that mickle care (sorrow) should be of [after] Arthurs departure. *The* Britons believe yet that

he is alive, and dwelleth in Avalun with *the* fairest of all elves [queens]; 'and *the* Britons ever yet expect when Arthur shall return.' Was never the man born, [nor] of ever any lady [woman] chosen, that knoweth of the sooth, to say more of Arthur. But whilom was a sage hight Merlin; he said with words,—his sayings were sooth,—that 'an' Arthur should yet come [*here* for] to help *the* English [Britons].

Another monument of little literary interest, but of not inferior philological, or, to speak more accurately, lexical and grammatical importance, is the Ancren Riwle, a code of monastic precepts drawn up in prose by an unknown author, for the guidance of a small nunnery, or rather religious society of ladies. This work was probably composed if not in the latter part of the twelfth, at latest very early in the thirteenth century, and is therefore nearly contemporaneous with the chronicle of Layamon, to the earlier text of which it bears much resemblance. The learned editor of the only printed edition, that published by the Camden Society in 1853, says nothing of the probable age of his manuscript, but Wright, Rel. Ant. i. 65, states it to be of the middle of the thirteenth century. There are at least three other manuscripts, besides a Latin translation, and one of the English copies is described as older than that from which the Camden Society's edition is printed. They differ from each other considerably in orthography, and these differences—some of which no doubt, were due to successive changes in the current modes of spelling — and the multiplication of copies of a work intended for the private use of three ladies, not members of any religious order, prove that it must have been written a considerable length of time before the execution of the latest manuscript. I believe, therefore, that it may be considered as belonging to the literature of the twelfth, quite as appropriately as to that of the thirteenth century.

About one third of the Ancren Riwle is occupied with instructions for ceremonial observances, the residue with moral and religious teachings. Like so many other ascetic treatises of the Middle Ages, whether intended for the edification of the

professed recluse or of the layman, it contains little of dogmatic theology, and few of those broader views of Christian duty which belong to the contemplation of man as what God made him — a social being. Hence it has neither the philosophical reach of thought which characterizes the works of Wycliffe and Pecock, and which is a natural result of free theological inquiry, nor the enlightened philanthropy and comprehensive charity, which breathe from the writings of divines emancipated from the narrow corporate interests and exclusive duties of cloistered life.

In a literary point of view, it has no such value as to entitle it to critical notice, and, bearing no stamp of English birth-right but its dialect, it is only for the value of its vocabulary and its syntax that I embrace it in my view of English philological history. Details on these points will be given in connection with the specimen selected as an illustration, and I shall at present confine my observations to the stock of words which compose its vocabulary. The most obvious difference in this respect between Layamon and the Ancren Riwle is the much larger proportion of Latin and Norman words in the latter. Sir Frederick Madden finds less than one hundred such in the 57,000 verses of the two texts of Layamon.* The quantity of matter in the Ancren Riwle, exclusive of Latin quotations, is less than half of that in Layamon, but the glossary to the former contains twice as many French words as Layamon, and yet omits a large number because they were thought too familiar to need explanation. Much of this difference in vocabulary is

* If we number words derived from the French (even including some that may have come directly from the Latin), we do not find in the earlier text of Layamon's poem so many as fifty, several of which were in usage, as appears by the Saxon Chronicle, previous to the middle of the twelfth century. Of this number the later text retains about thirty, and adds to them rather more than forty, which are not found in the earlier version; so that if we reckon ninety words of French origin in both texts, containing together more than 56,800 lines, we shall be able to form a tolerably correct estimate how little the English language was really affected by foreign converse, even as late as the middle of the thirteenth century. Sir F. Madden, Pref. to Layamon, vol. i. p. xxiii.

doubtless to be ascribed to the fact that the Ancren Riwle, treating of religious subjects, naturally adopted the dialect of the Romish ascetic discipline, which was in great part of Latin derivation; but still, as the Ancren Riwle was written in English, while Layamon's work was translated from French and Latin, we should have expected a larger relative share of the foreign element in the latter production than a comparison of the two exhibits. The Latin and French words of the Ancren Riwle, however, are by no means all due to its religious character, and we find in it many Norman terms belonging to the common dialect of secular life. Compound words of Saxon etymology are less frequent in Layamon than in the latter work, which has some remarkable agglutinations, such, for example, as studestapeluestnesse, meaning nearly what N. P. Willis somewhere calls *stay-at-home-itiveness*, the *οἰκουρία* of the Greeks. This greater frequency of Norman words might be thought to prove that the prose work is of later date than the poetical, but it is by no means conclusive evidence, because, as I have already remarked, the diction of poetry is always archaic, and Layamon probably confined himself to the conventionally established vocabulary of his art. The orthography appears to point to the opposite conclusion, though this is a very doubtful question. In the Ancren Riwle, the Anglo-Saxon *æ* has almost disappeared and the combination *eo* is less frequent, but, on the other hand, it retains the *iw*, as *riwle*, rule, and, oddly enough, *Giws*, *Giwerie*, Jews, Jewry, while in Layamon this combination is often replaced by *ew* or *eow*. The Ancren Riwle preserves the *hw*, but Layamon, except in one or two instances, has always *wh*.* The arrangement of words, however, the periodic construction, which is less likely to be a dialectic peculiarity than

* Most orthoepists consider *hw* as a true phonographic representation of the sound supposed to be indicated by it, which is that of the modern *wh* in *whale*, but Klipstein's Anglo-Saxon Grammar, p. 47, note, says: 'this combination of sound is, indeed, one.' I know no criterion by which we can determine whether a sound be *one*, but the experimental test of capacity of prolongation. A sound (if the singular article can be applied to an articulation composed of successive

a result of the general movement of speech, is almost modern in the Ancren Riwle — so much so, sometimes, as to lead one to question the authenticity of the manuscripts—but this I think is to be ascribed to the colloquial style of the work; for the diction of common speech among educated men at that period must have been much influenced by the dialect of the court and the Norman nobility.

The following extract is from Part IV. on Temptations. Camden Society edition, pp. 210—216: —

Summe iuglurs beoð þet ne kunnen seruen of non oðer gleo, buten makien cheres & wrenchen mis hore muð, & schulen mid hore eien. Of þis mestere serueð þeo uniselie ontfule iðe deofles kurt, to bringen o leihtre hore ontfule louerd. Uor ȝif ei seið wel oðer deð wel, nonesweis ne muwen heo loken þiderward mid riht eie of gode heorte: auh winckeð oðere half, & biholdeð o luft & asquint: & ȝif þer is out to eadwiten, oðer lodlich, þiderward heo schuleð mid eiðer eien! & hwon heo ihereð þet god, heo sleateð adun boa two hore earen! auh þet lust aȝean þet vuel is ever wid open. Þeonne heo wrencheð hore muð mis, hwon heo turneð god to vuel! & ȝif hit is sumdel vuel, þuruh more lastunge heo wrencheð hit to wurse. Þeos beoð hore owune prophetes forcwiddares. Þeos bodieð biuoren hwu þe ateliche deouel schal ȝet agesten ham mid his grimme grennunge, & hu heo schulen ham sulf grennen & niuelen, & makien sur semblaunt uor þe muchele angoise, iðe pine of helle. Auh for þui heo beoð þe lesse te menen, þet heo biuorenhond leorneð hore meister to makien grimme chere.

Þe wreðfulle biuoren þe ueonde skirmeð mid kniues, & he is his knif-worpare, & pleieð mid sweordes, & bereð ham bi þe scherpe orde uppen his tunge. Sweord & knif eiðer beoð scherpe & keoruinde wordes þet he worpeð frommard him, & skirmeð touward oðre. Auh

elements), which requires either two emissions of breath or two different positions of the organs of speech, cannot be prolonged, though the separate elements of it often may be. The combination *hw*, *wh*, is not only incapable of prolongation, but cannot be uttered at all without the aid of a third element, namely, a vowel following.

There are, however, a few sounds which may be indefinitely prolonged, and yet seem to be composed of two still more elementary articulations. I refer to those into which the *y* consonant appears to enter as a subordinate component. The English *ch*, *sh*, are very nearly *t* + *y* and *s* + *y*, and in some orthographies, the Swedish, for example, in which *j* corresponds to our *y* consonant, they are expressed accordingly, as tjäder, in English spelling, *chader*, själ, *shale*, &c. &c.

heo bodieð hwu þe deoflen schulen pleien mid ham, mid hore scherpe aules, & skirmen mid ham abuten, & dvsten ase enne pilcheclut, euchon touward oðer, & mid helle sweordes alsnesien ham þuruhut, þet beoð kene & keoruinde, & ateliche pinen.

Þe slowe lið & slepeð iðe deofles berme, ase his deore deorling: & te deouel leieð his tutel adun to his earen, & tuteleð him al þet he euer wule. Uor, so hit is sikerliche to hwamso is idel of god: þe ueond maðeleð ȝeorne, & te idele underuoð luueliche his lore. Þe þet is idel & ȝemeleas, he is þes deofles bermes slep: auh he schal a domesdei grimliche abreiden mid te dredful dreame of þe englene bemen: & ine helle wondrede ateliche awakien. 'Surgite, mortui, qui jacetis in sepulchris: surgite, et venite ad judicium Saluatoris.'

Þe ȝiscare is þes feondes askebaðie, & lið euer iðen asken, & fareð abuten asken & bisiliche stureð him uorte rukelen muchele & monie ruken togedere, & bloweð þerinne, & ablent him sulf: paðereð & makeð þerinne figures of angrim, ase þeos rikenares doð þ̄ habbeð muchel uorto rikenen. Þis is al þes canges blisse, & te ueond bihalt al þis gomen, & lauhweð þet he to bersted. Wel understond euerich wis mon þis: þet gold & seoluer boðe, & euerich eorðlich eihte, nis buten eorðe & asken, þet ablent euerichne mon þet bloaweð in ham: þet is, þet boluweð him ine ham: þuruh ham ine heorte prude: & al þet he rukeleð & gedereð togedere, & ethalt of eni þinge þet nis buten asken, more þen hit beo neod, al schal ine helle iwurðen to him tadden & neddren, & boðe, ase Isaie seið, schulen beon of wurmes his kurtel & his kuuertur, þet nolde her þe neodfule ueden ne schruden. 'Subter te sternetur tinea, et operimentum tuum vermis.'

Þe ȝiure glutun is þes fondes manciple. Uor he stikeð euer iðe celere, oðer iðe kuchene. His heorte is iðe disches: his þouht is al iðe neppe: his lif iðe tunne: his soule iðe crocke. Kumeð forð biuoren his Louerde bismitted & bismeoruwed, a dischs ine his one hond, & a scoale in his oðer: maðeled mid wordes, & wigeleð ase uordrunken mon þet haueð imunt to uallen: bihalt his greate wombe, & te ueond lauhweð þet he to bersteð. God þreateð þeos þus þuruh Isaie. 'Servi mei comedent, et vos esurietis,' &c.: 'Mine men,' he seið, 'schulen eten, & ou schal euer hungren: & ȝe schulen beon ueondes fode, world a buten ende.' 'Quantum glorificavit se et in deliciis fuit, tantum date ei luctum et tormentum.' In Apocalipsi: 'Contra unum poculum quod miscuit, miscete ei duo.' Gif þe gulchecuppe weallinde bres to drincken, & ȝeot in his wide þrote þet he aswelte wiðinnen: Aȝean one, ȝif him two. Lo! swuch is Godes dom aȝean þe ȝiure, & aȝean þe drinckares iðe Apocalipse.

The following words require explanation, or merit notice. cheres, faces, wry faces, grimaces. No satisfactory etymology has been suggested for this word, which occurs in the Low Latin of the seventh century. See Diez in voc.;—uniselie, unhappy, from A.-S. sælig, happy, obsolete;—ontfule, malignant, from Icel. vondr, Dan. ond, evil, wicked. I believe this root occurs in A.-S. only in compounds. It is obsolete;—kurt. This and the numerous allied words are, according to Diez, from Lat. chors, (cohors) cortis. See Ducange, s. v., where the earliest definition is: atrium rusticum stabulis et aliis ædificiis circumdatum;—auh, but, A.-S. ac, obsolete, if not extant in certain uses of the interjection *ah;*—o luft, A.-S. lyft, air, sky, extant in *a-loft*;—out, *aught;*—eadwiten, to blame, A.-S., extant in *to twit;*—lodlich, loathsome, A.-S. laðlic. This root seems to have passed from the Gothic into the Romance languages, as in Fr. laid;—sleateð is defined by Morton: '*sleeteth*, aims at, hangs down his ears, like a dog in pursuit of game.' If this is correct, the root would be slot (Icel. slóðr, a path), a track;—lastunge, slander, Ger. Lästerung, obsolete;—forcwiddares, foretellers, from cweðen, to say, obsolete;—ateliche, hateful;—agesten, to frighten, either the A.-S. egesian, or from the same root as *aghast;*—niuelen. Morton suggests to beat with the fists, in analogy with Sc. to nevel, to strike, as the meaning. I think, however, the A.-S. neowel, prostrate, furnishes a better etymology, and if this is the root, niuelen means to throw themselves to the ground;—sur, *sour;*—menen, to *moan*, bemoan, lament;—skirmeð, fenceth, from skirmen, Fr. escrimer, allied to Ger. schirmen, not found in A.-S., and extant in English only in *skirmish*;—knif-worpare, knife-thrower, knif and worpen or weorpen, A.-S. weorpan, to throw, obsolete;—ord, point, edge, obsolete;—pilch-clout: pilch is supposed to be Lat. pelliceus, of fur, and to have acquired the meaning of flannel;—alsnesien, A.-S. asnæsan, to run against, to strike, obsolete;—berme, bosom, obsolete;—tutel, mouth, lips, tuteleð, from tutelen, to speak. The etymology of these words is not obvious, unless we refer them to A.-S. þeotan, which is imitative: obsolete;—maðeleð, from maðelen, to talk, obsolete;—ȝeorne, willingly, extant only in the verb *to yearn;*—underfōð, receives, from underuongen, obsolete;—ȝemeleas, heedless, from ȝeme, care, heed, obsolete;—abreiden, to awake suddenly, to be startled, obsolete;—bemen, trumpets, obsolete;—ȝiscare, covetous man, from A.-S. gytsian, to desire, to covet, obsolete;—askebaðie, ash-gatherer, obsolete;—rukelen, to heap up, A.-S. hreac, a heap, obsolete;—paðereð, poketh, the

modern *pother, potter;*—augrim, *algorism, algorithm,* arithmetic;—cang, a fool. This word does not appear to be A.-S. Obsolete;—eihte, possession, obsolete;—boluweð, disturbs himself, A.-S. bolgan, obsolete;—ethalt, from etholden, to retain, obsolete except in *hold,* and its derivatives and compounds;—iwurðen, to become, obsolete;—schruden, to clothe, obsolete;—ȝiure, greedy, obsolete;—neppe, table-cloth, Fr. nappe, extant in diminutive form, *napkin;*—scoale, bowl, Dan. Skaal, obsolete;—imunt, allied with mind. haueð imunt, has in mind to, hence, is about to;—a butan ende, a, always, obsolete;—butan, without;—gulchecuppe, gulchen, to swallow, cognate with Lat. gula;—weallinde, welling, boiling, molten;—ȝeot, pour, A.-S. geotan, obsolete;—aswelte, perish, extant in *swelter.*

In this extract there are about twenty words, excluding repetitions, of Latin and French origin. This is more than three per cent. of the whole number, and if we exclude the repetitions of native words also, that proportion would be greatly increased. More than thirty words used in these passages have become obsolete, and of these, many, as will be seen by the above notes, are important. I add Morton's translation:

There are some jesters who know of no other means of exciting mirth but to make wry faces, and distort their mouth, and scowl with their eyes. This art the unhappy, envious man practiseth in the devil's court, to excite to laughter their envious Lord. For, if any one saith or doeth well, they cannot, by any means, look that way with the direct eye of a good heart; but wink in another direction, and look on the left hand, and obliquely: and if there is anything to blame or dislike, there they scowl with both eyes; and when they hear of any good, they hang down both their ears; but their desire of evil is ever wide open. Then they distort their mouth, when they turn good to evil; and if there is somewhat of evil, they distort it, and make it worse by detraction. These are their own prophets—foretelling their own end. They shew beforehand how the hateful fiend shall strike terror into them with his hideous grinning; and how they shall themselves gnash their teeth, and beat their breasts, with rueful looks for the great anguish of the pains of hell. But they are the less to be pitied, because they have learned beforehand their trade of making grim cheer.

The wrathful man fenceth before the devil with knives, and he is his

knife-thrower, and playeth with swords, and beareth them upon his tongue by the sharp point. Sword and knife both are sharp and cutting words which he casteth forth, and therewith attacks others. And it forebodes how the devils shall play with them with their sharp awls, and skirmish about with them, and toss them like a pilch-clout every one towards another, and strike them through with hell-swords, which are keen, cutting, and horrible pains.

The sluggard lieth and sleepeth in the devil's bosom, as his dear darling; and the devil applieth his mouth to his ears, and tells him whatever he will. For, this is certainly the case with every one who is not occupied in any thing good: the devil assiduously talks, and the idle lovingly receive his lessons. He that is idle and careless is the devil's bosom-sleeper: but he shall on Doomsday be fearfully startled with the dreadful sound of the angels' trumpets, and shall awaken in terrible amazement in hell. 'Arise, ye dead, who lie in graves: arise, and come to the Savior's judgment.'

The covetous man is the devil's ash-gatherer, and lieth always in the ashes, and busily bestirs himself to heap up much, and to rake many together, and bloweth therein, and blindeth himself, poketh, and maketh therein figures of arithmetic, as those accountants do who have much to reckon up. This is all the joy of this fool, and the devil seeth all this game, and laugheth so that he bursteth. Every wise man well understandeth this; that both gold and silver, and all earthly goods, are nothing but earth and ashes, which blind every man that bloweth upon them; that is, disquieteth himself for them; is proud in heart through them; and all that he heapeth up and gathereth together, and possesses of any thing more than is necessary, is nothing but ashes, and in hell it shall all become toads and adders to him; and both his kirtel and his covering, as Isaiah saith, shall be of worms, who would not feed nor clothe the needy, 'The worm is spread under thee, and the worms cover thee.'

The greedy glutton is the devil's purveyor; for he always haunts the cellar or the kitchen. His heart is in the dishes; all his thought is of the table-cloth; his life is in the tun, his soul in the pitcher. He cometh into the presence of his Lord besmutted and besmeared, with a dish in one hand and a bowl in the other. He talks much incoherently, and staggereth like a drunken man who seemeth about to fall, looks at his great belly, and the devil laughs so that he bursteth. God thus threateneth such persons by Isaiah, 'Servi mei comedent, et vos esurietis,' &c.: 'My servants shall eat, but ye shall always hunger;' and ye shall be food for devils, world without end! 'How much she hath

glorified herself, and hath lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her.' 'Contra unum poculum quod miscuit, miscete ei duo.' Give the tosspot molten brass to drink, and pour it into his wide throat, that he may die inwardly. Lo! such is the judgment of God against the glutton, and against drunkards, in the Apocalypse.

The Ormulum, of which I have spoken as one of the most important philological monuments of the period under consideration, has excited, and, in some respects, merits more attention than the Ancren Riwle.*

The Ormulum consists of a paraphrase of scripture with a homiletic commentary, and is constructed much on the plan of Otfrid's Krist. The extant fragments, which fortunately contain the dedication and commencement, amount to twenty thousand verses, but are apparently only an inconsiderable portion of the entire poem. The author was Ormin, or Orm, an English monk of the order of St. Augustine, and he named the poem ORMULUM after himself, saying, at the opening: —

> Þiss boc iss nemmnedd Orrmulum
> Forrþi þatt Orrm itt wrohhte.

The bestowal of his own name upon the work may be considered an indication of personal vanity on the part of the author, and it is evident that he was ambitious to distinguish himself as a reformer, both in English philology, or at least orthography, and in religion. His system of spelling,—not new in principle, and to a certain extent common to all the Gothic languages—though cumbersome in practice, is carried out by Ormin with a consistency and uniformity that show a very careful attention to English phonology, and give it something of the merit of an original method. He evidently attached much value to this system, and expected a considerable circulation of his book, for he earnestly enjoins upon all who copy it,

* See, on the vocabulary and the prosody of the Ormulum, First Series, Lectures V., pp. 110, 111; VI., p. 123; XIX., p. 421; XXIV., pp. 520—522.

to follow scrupulously the spelling employed by himself. Either for want of poetical merit, or for the great freedom with which he censured the corruptions of the Church, or because readers were repelled by the uncouth appearance of his orthography, or for some other unknown reason, the book failed to secure the popularity its author hoped for, and it does not seem to have ever been copied at all. The only existing manuscript is probably the original of the author himself, and there is no reason to believe that his spelling was ever adopted by any other writer. The principal peculiarity of Ormin's orthography is that the consonant is doubled after short vowels, except in a few cases where, probably for want of room in the manuscript for two consonants, a semicircular mark is put over a vowel to indicate its quantity. There are also marks of contraction, and some other signs the force of which is not always apparent.

It is obvious that if the spelling of the Ormulum were proved truly to represent the general contemporaneous pronunciation of English at the time it was written, this orthography would be a very important aid in acquiring a knowledge of that pronunciation, because the temporal quantity of all the vowels is indicated in every combination in which they can possibly occur. The author evidently designed to make it a phonographic expression of the normal English articulation, for he expressly declares that *English*—a term which he would hardly have applied to a local dialect—can be properly written in no other way. Besides this, it may be observed that, with respect to the temporal length of the vowels, the notation of Orm, in most cases, corresponds with what is, and is supposed to have long been, the habitual pronunciation of English, though in many cases, the essential quality of vowels and the accentuation of syllables has certainly been changed.

On the other hand, the number of Scandinavian words and idioms in the vocabulary and syntax has led many critics to regard the work of Orm as a specimen of a North-eastern patois, deriving a special character from the Danish colonists in that

quarter of England.* The weight of this evidence has perhaps been exaggerated, and I do not attach much importance to the coincidences between the Danish orthography and that of the Ormulum. English pronunciation agrees with the Danish in many points in which both differ from the German, and I am much disposed to believe that the spelling of the Ormulum constitutes as faithful a representation of the oral English of its time as any one work could be, at a period of great confusion of speech.†

The versification differs from the Anglo-Saxon models in wanting alliteration, and in possessing a regular metrical flow; from the Norman French in wanting rhyme; and, allowing for the difference between accent and classical quantity, it closely resembles that of some Latin poems of the Middle Ages, from which it was probably imitated.

The vocabulary contains a few words borrowed from sacred or ecclesiastical Latin, but scarcely any trace of Norman influence. The syntax of Orm, as will be seen by an examination of the passages I select for illustration, does not differ much from that of modern English, and if the work were reduced to the present orthography, it would present very few difficulties to a reader at all familiar with old English literature. The most remarkable general characteristic of the syntax is its regularity, which, in spite of the temptations to licence, common to all modes of versification, is greater than is to be found in any other English

* Perhaps the most important Scandinavianism in the Ormulum is the use of aren, the origin of the modern *are*, as the third person plural indicative present of the verb beon, ben, beo, *to be*. Aren occurs, for the first time in English so far as I have observed, on pp. 157 and 237 of the first volume of the Ormulum, though sinndenn, which in Layamon is represented by beon, beo, beoð, bið, &c. is the more common form of this plural.

† The orthography of the Ormulum, if it does not disprove the doctrine of the diphthongal pronunciation of the long vowels, certainly lends no countenance to it. Had this been a very marked characteristic of the English articulation of his time, it could hardly have escaped so acute an ear as that of Orm; and, on the other hand, if the vowels had been divided into distinct shades, as in modern Danish, he would have found himself under the necessity of inventing characters to represent these varieties of sound.

composition, except those of modern date. This implies not only a closer attention to the subject than had been bestowed upon it by other authors, but a general stability of grammatical forms, evidence of which is not to be found elsewhere. The departures from the author's own system are, with very few exceptions, as might be expected, sacrifices to the canons of metre.

Considered as a poem, the Ormulum has no merit but that of smooth, fluent, and regular versification, and it exhibits none of the characteristic traits of English genius. With the exception, therefore, of its remarkable prosody, its claims to the attention of the student are of the same character as those of the Ancren Riwle, and it is not a fit subject for literary criticism.

I have embraced this poem in the same class with Layamon and the Ancren Riwle in deference to the opinion of English philologists, who generally incline to treat its dialect as semi-Saxon, rather than as distinctively English. It appears to me to belong to a later date than either of those writings, or than some productions which I shall have occasion to consider hereafter; but its total want of all trace of nationality of thought and character induces me to accede the more readily to its separation from the literature which forms the subject of the next lecture, and which, in some cases at least, shows a faint glimmering of the spark that was soon to be kindled to a radiant flame.

Affterr þatt tatt te Laferrd Crist
After that that the Lord Christ

Wass cumenn off Egyppte
was come from Egypt

Inntill þe land off Galileo,
into the land of Galilee,

Till Nazaræþess chesstre,
to Nazareth's town,

Þæraffterr seȝȝþ þe Goddspellboc
thereafter saith the Gospelbook

Bilæf he þær well lannge
remained he there well long

Wiþþ hise frend tatt haffdenn himm
with his friends that had him

To ȝemenn & to gætenn,
to keep and to protect,

Wiþþ Marȝe þatt hiss moderr wass
with Mary that his mother was

& maȝȝdenn þwerrt ūt clene,
and maiden throughout clean,

& wiþþ Josæp þatt wass himm sett
and with Joseph that was him set

To fedenn & to fosstrenn.
to feed and to foster.

& illke Lenntenn forenn þeȝȝ
and every Lent fared they

Till ȝerrsalæmess chesstre
to Jerusalem's city

Aȝȝ att te Passkemessedaȝȝ,
aye at the Passoverday,

Swa summ þe boc hemm tahhte,
so as the book them taught,

To frellsenn þær þatt heȝhe tid
to keep there that holyday

O þatt Judisskenn wise,
in the Jewish wise,

Forr þatt teȝȝ wærenn gode menn,
for that they were good men,

& Godess laȝhess heldenn.
and God's laws held.

And siþþenn o þatt ȝer þatt Crist
And afterwards in the year that Christ

Wass off twellf winnterr elde
was of twelve winters age

Þeȝȝ comenn inntill ȝerrsalæm
they come into Jerusalem

Att teȝȝre Passkemesse,
at their Passover,

& heldenn þær þatt hallȝhe tid
and held there that holy time

O þatt Judisskenn wise.
in the Jewish wise.

& Jesu Crist wass þær wiþþ hemm,
and Jesus Christ was there with them,

Swa summ þe Goddspell kiþeþþ.
so as the Gospel saith.

& affterr þatt te tid wass gan
and after that the time was gone

Þeȝȝ wenndenn fra þe temmple,
they wended from the temple,

& ferrdenn towarrd Nazaræþ
and fared towards Nazareth

An daȝȝess gang till efenn,
a day's journey till evening,

& wenndenn þatt te Laferrd Crist
and weened that the Lord Christ

Wiþþ hemm þatt gate come;
with them that way came;

& he wass þa behinndenn hemm
and he was then behind them

Bilefedd att te temmple;
remaining at the temple;

& tatt ne wisste nohht hiss kinn
and that not wist not his kin

Acc wennde þatt he come,
but weened that he came,

& ȝedenn heore weȝȝe forrþ
and went their way forth

Till þatt itt comm till efenn,
till that it came to evening,

& ta þeȝȝ misstenn þeȝȝre child,
and then they missed their child,

& itt hemm offerrþuhhte,
and it them grieved,

& ȝedenn till, & solihtenn himm
and (they) went, and sought him

Bitwenenn sibbe & cuþe,
among relations and acquaintances,

& teȝȝ ne fundenn nohht off himm,
and they not found nought of him,

Forr he wass att te temmple.
for he was at the temple.

& teȝȝ þa wenndenn efft onnȝæn
and they then turned back again

þatt dere child to sekenn,
that dear child to seek,

& comenn efft till ȝerrsalæm,
and came again to Jerusalem,

To sekenn himm þær binnenn.
to seek him there within.

& teȝȝ himm o þe þridde daȝȝ
and they him on the third day

þær fundenn i þe temmple
there found in the temple

Bitwenenn þatt Judisskenn flocc
among the Jewish flock

Þatt læredd wass o boke;
that learned was in book;

& tære he satt to fraȝȝnenn hemm
and there he sat to ask them

Off þeȝȝre bokess lare,
of their book's lore,

& alle þatt himm herrdenn þær,
and all that him heard there,

Hemm þuhhte mikell wunnderr
them thought much wonder

Off þatt he wass full ȝæp & wis
of that he was full shrewd and wise

To swarenn & to frazznenn.
to answer and to ask.

& Sannte Marȝe comm till himm
and Saint Mary came to him

& sezzde himm þuss wiþþ worde,
and said (to) him thus with word,

Whi didesst tu, lef sune, þuss
Why didst thou, dear son, thus

Wiþþ uss, forr uss to swennkenn?
with us, for us to trouble?

Witt hafenn sohht te widewhar
we-two have sought thee widewhere

Icc & ti fæderr baþe
I and thy father both

Wiþþ serrhfull herrte & sariȝ mod,
with sorrowful heart and sorry mood,

Whi didesst tu þiss dede?
why didst thou this deed?

& tanne sezzde Jesu Crist
and then said Jesus Christ

Till baþe þuss wiþþ worde,
to both thus with word,

Whatt wass ȝuw swa to sekenn me,
what was (there to) you so to seek me,

Whatt wass ȝuw swa to serrȝhenn?
what was (there to) you so to sorrow?

Ne wisste ȝe nohht tatt me birrþ
not wist ye not that me becomes

Min faderr wille forþenn?
my father's will (to) do?

Ne þatt me birrþ beon hoȝhefull
nor that me becomes (to) be careful

Abutenn hise þingess?
about his things?

& teȝȝ ne mihhtenn nohht tatt word
and they not might not that word

ȝēt ta wel unnderrstanndenn;
yet then wel understand;

& he þa ȝede forþ wiþþ hemm
and he then went forth with them

& dide hemm heore wille,
and did them there will,

& comm wiþþ hemm till Nazaræþ,
and came with them to Nazareth,

Swa summ þe Goddspell kiþeþþ,
so as the Gospel saith,

& till hemm baþe he lutte & bæh
and to them both he obeyed and bowed

þurrh soþfasst herrsummnesse,
through soothfast obedience,

& wass wiþþ hemm till þatt he wass
and was with them till that he was

Off þrittiȝ winnterr elde.
of thirty winters' age.

& ure laffdiȝ Marȝe toc
and our lady Mary took

All þatt ȝho sahh & herrde
all that she saw and heard

Off hire sune Jesu Crist,
of her son Jesus Christ,

& off hiss Goddcunndnesse,
and of his Divinity,

& all ȝhōt held inn hire þohht,
and all she-it held in her thought,

Swa summ þe Goddspell kiþeþþ,
so as the Gospel saith,

& leȝȝde itt all tosamenn aȝȝ
and laid it all together aye

Inn hire þohhtess arrke.
in her thought's ark.

& hire sune wex & þraf
And her son waxed and throve

I wissdom & inn elde,
in wisdom and in age,

& he wass Godd & gode menn
and he was (to) God and good men

Well swiþe lef & dere;
well very pleasing and dear;

& tatt wass rihht, forr he wass Godd,
and that was right, for he was God,

& god onn alle wise.
and good in all ways.

Her endeþþ nu þiss Goddspell þuss
Here endeth now this Gospel thus

& uss birrþ itt þurrhsekenn,
and us (it) becomes it to through-search,

To lokenn whatt itt læreþþ uss
to observe what it teacheth us

Off ure sawle nede.
of our soul's need.

NOTES.—I have already stated the general principle of Orm's orthography. There are apparent deviations from his own rules, but these, when not mere accidents, are doubtless explicable as special cases, though we cannot always reconcile them to his usual practice. It will be seen that in words beginning with þ, and now pronounced with the *th* sound, *t* is often substituted, but this is always done in conformity with

what was doubtless an orthoepical rule. After words ending in *d*, *t*, and sometimes *ss*, þ becomes *t*, as in the first line of the above extract. There are some exceptions to this rule, but they are not important enough to be noticed. frend, the sign of the plural is here omitted;—wass—bilefedd. This corresponds with the German war geblieben;—witt, we-two, dual form;—whatt wass ȝuw, what was to you, what had you, what ailed you;—me birrþ, the verb is here an impersonal, as *ought* sometimes was at a later period;—faderr wille, the omission of the possessive sign after words indicative of family relation was very common for at least two centuries after the time of Orm;—ȝhōt, contraction for ȝho itt.

LECTURE V.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE OF THE FIRST PERIOD: FROM THE MIDDLE OF THE THIRTEENTH TO THE MIDDLE OF THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY.

As I have remarked in a former lecture, the change from Anglo-Saxon and Semi-Saxon to English was so gradual, that the history of the revolution can be divided only by arbitrary epochs; and I have given some reasons for thinking that whatever date we may assign to the formation of the English speech, English literature cannot be regarded as having had a beginning until the English tongue was employed in the expression of the conceptions of a distinctively national genius. This, as we have seen, cannot be said to have taken place until after the middle of the fourteenth century; but the incipient chemical union of Saxon and French was attended with an effervescence which threw off some spirited products, though it must be confessed that most of what is called the English literature of the thirteenth century, when compared with the contemporaneous poetry of Continental Europe, and especially of France, resembles dregs and lees rather than anything more ethereal.

To the grammarian and the etymologist, the history of the transition period, or the larva and chrysalis states, is of interest and importance as necessary to a clear view of the physiology of the English speech; but, both because I aim to exhibit the literary adaptations of the language rather than its genesis

or its linguistic affinities, and because of the extreme difficulty of intelligibly presenting niceties of grammatical form to the ear alone, I attempt nothing beyond a very general statement of the leading facts of this period of English philological history.

We shall have time and space to criticise only the more conspicuous writers and their dialect, and even among these writers I must confine myself to those who were something more than merely products of their age and country. I can notice only two classes, namely, such as are emphatically important witnesses to the state of English philology in their time, and such as contributed—by the popularity of their writings and their sympathy with the tendencies of the yet but half-developed nationality which was struggling into existence—to give form and direction to contemporaneous and succeeding literary effort, and are consequently to be regarded, not as examples, results, simply, but as creative influences in English letters.

Of the former class, the most celebrated is the short proclamation issued in the year 1258, in the reign of Henry III., which many English philologists regard as the first specimen of English as contradistinguished from Semi-Saxon.* There is no very good grammatical reason for treating this proclamation as belonging to an essentially different phase of English philology from many earlier writings of the same century; for though it is, in particular points, apparently more modern than

* I suppose the editors of the great English Dictionary now in course of preparation under the auspices of the London Philological Society, consider this state-paper as not English, but Semi-Saxon; for it is not among the monuments enumerated as examined for Coleridge's Glossarial Index to the English literature of the thirteenth century. Short as it is, it contains, besides some variant forms not noticed by Coleridge, these words not found in the Glossarial Index: *a*, always, aye; *aforesaid* (*toforeniseide*); *besigte*, provision, ordinance; *freme*, profit, good; *fultume*, help; *moge*, nobles [?]; *ourself* (*usselven*); *redesman*, councillor; *setness* (*isetness*), law, decree; *sign* (*iseined*), *verb*; *worsen* (*iwersed*); *worthnesse*, honour. We may hence infer that the still unpublished relics of the literature of the thirteenth century will furnish a considerable number of words not yet incorporated into English vocabularies.

some of them—the Ancren Riwle for instance—it is, in other respects, quite as decidedly of an older structure. Its real importance arises chiefly from the fact, that it is one of the very few specimens of the English of that century, the date of which is positively known*, that of the older text of Layamon being rather doubtful, those of the later text and of the Ormulum, as well as of the Ancren Riwle, and of most other manuscripts ascribed to the thirteenth century, altogether uncertain.

Another circumstance which adds much to its value is, that it was issued on an important political occasion—the establishment of a governmental council or commission, in derogation of the royal authority, and invested with almost absolute powers—and that, as appears from the document itself, copies of it were sent, for public promulgation, to every shire in England. The probability therefore is strong, that this translation—for the proclamation appears to have been drawn up in French—was not written in the peculiar local dialect of any one district, but in the form which most truly corresponded to the general features of the popular speech, in order that it might be everywhere intelligible. It must then be considered the best evidence existing of the condition of English at any fixed period in the thirteenth century.

It has been objected against this view of the philological importance of this document, that, being an official paper, 'it is made up, in great part, of established phrases of form, many of which had probably become obsolete in ordinary speech and writing,' † and hence is to be regarded as no true representative of the current English of its time, but as an assemblage of archaic forms which had lost their vitality, and, of course, as

* I am perhaps in error in treating the period to which this monument belongs, as altogether certain. There is no doubt as to the date of the original composition, but are we sure that this particular English copy is contemporaneous with the original?

† Craik, Outlines of the History of the English Language.

belonging philologically to an earlier period. This objection is founded on what I think an erroneous view of the facts of the case. After the Conquest, the Anglo-Saxon was superseded by French and Latin as the mediums of official communication, and there is reason to believe that, except in grants to individuals and other matters of private concern, Semi-Saxon and Early English were little, if at all, used by the government, this proclamation being, I believe, the only *public* document known to have been promulgated in the native tongue during the whole of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. It was probably employed on this occasion, because the political movement which extorted from the crown the establishment of the commission was, as far as in that age any political movement could be, of a popular character, and it was thought a prudent measure to publish this concession to the demands of the people in a dialect intelligible to all.

There were, then, at that time, no 'established phrases of form' in the political dialect of the English language. The government could not have used a stereotyped phraseology, for the reason that none such existed; and accordingly this proclamation must be viewed as an authentic monument of the popular speech of England in the middle of the thirteenth century, so far as that speech had yet acquired a consistent and uniform character.

It is very short, containing, besides proper names, only about three hundred words in all, and only between one hundred and thirty and one hundred and forty different words, even counting as such all the different inflections of the same stem. Of course, it exemplifies but a small proportion of either the grammatical forms or the vocabulary. In this latter respect it shows no trace of Norman influence, all the words being English, except the proper names, a couple of official titles, *duke* and *marshal*, and one or two words which the Anglo-Saxon had, in earlier ages received from the Latin; but in the grammar, the breaking down of the Anglo-Saxon inflectional system is plainly per-

ceptible. I give the text as I find it in Haupt's Zeitschrift, xi. 298, 299, after Pauli.*

Henr', thurg Godes fultume King on Engleneloande, lhoaverd on Irloand, duk' on Norm', on Aquitain', and eorl on Aniow, send igretinge to all hise halde ilaerde and ilaewede on Huntendon' schir'.

Thaet witen ge wel alle, thaet we willen and unnen, thaet thaet ure raedesmen alle other the moare dael of heom, thaet beoth ichosen thurg us and thurg thaet loandes folk on ure kuneriche, habbeth idon and schullen don in the worthnesse of Gode and on ure treowthe for the freme of the loande thurg the besigte of than toforeniseide redesmen, beo stedefaest and ilestinde in alle thinge a buten aende, and we hoaten alle ure treowe in the treowthe, that heo us ogen, thaet heo stedefaestliche healden and swerien to healden and to werien the isetnesses, thaet beon imakede and beon to makien thurg than toforeniseide raedesmen other thurg the moare dael of heom alswo alse hit is biforen iseid, and thaet aehc other helpe thaet for to done bi than ilche othe agenes alle men, rigt for to done and to foangen, and noan ne nime of loande ne of egte, wherethurg this besigte muge beon ilet other iwersed on onie wise and gif oni other onie cumen her ongenes, we willen and hoaten, thaet alle ure treowe heom healden deadliche ifoan, and for thaet we willen, thaet this beo stedefaest and lestinde, we senden gew this writ open iseined with ure seel to halden amanges gew ine hord.

Witnesse usselven aet Lunden' thane egtetenthe day on the monthe of Octobr' in the two and fowertigthe geare of ure cruninge.

And this wes idon aetforen ure isworene redesmen:

[here follow the signatures of several *redesmen* or councillors]

and aetforen othre moge.

And al on tho ilche worden is isend in to aeurihce othre shcire ouer al thaere kuneriche on Engleneloande and ek in tel Irelonde.

In modern English thus:

Henry, by the grace of God king in (of) England, lord in (of) Ireland, duke in (of) Normandy, in (of) Aquitaine, and earl in (of) Anjou, sends greeting to all his lieges, clerk and lay, in Huntingdonshire.

This know ye well all, that we will and grant that what our council-

* I regret that I am unable to furnish a literal copy of this interesting document. Pauli, from whom the text in Haupt is printed, has thought fit to reject the ȝ of the original, and I suppose also the þ and ð, one or both of which it probably employed. Whether other changes have been made, I do not know, but even these are as unjustifiable as it would be to substitute *g* for γ, or *ch* for χ in printing a unique Greek manuscript.

lors, all or the major part of them, who are chosen by us and by the land's people in our kingdom, have done and shall do, to the honour of God and in allegiance to us, for the good of the land, by the ordinance of the aforesaid councillors, be stedfast and permanent in all things, time without end, and we command all our lieges by the faith that they owe us, that they stedfastly hold, and swear to hold and defend the regulations that are made and to be made by the aforesaid councillors, or by the major part of them, as is before said, and that each help others this to do, by the same oath, against all men, right to do and to receive, and that none take of land or goods, whereby this ordinance may be let or impaired in any wise, and if any [sing.] or any [plural] transgress here against, we will and command that all our lieges them hold as deadly foes, and because we will that this be stedfast and permanent, we send you these letters patent sealed with our seal, to keep among you in custody.

Witness ourself at London the eighteenth day in the month of October in the two and fortieth year of our coronation.

And this was done before our sworn councillors:

[Signatures]

and before other nobles [?].

And all in the same words is sent into every other shire over all the kingdom in (of) England and also into Ireland.

The first thing which strikes us in the aspect of this proclamation is a structure of period so nearly corresponding with present usage, that, as the above translation shows, it is easy to make a modern English version, conforming to the original in verbal arrangement and syntax, and yet departing very little from the idiom of our own time. The positional syntax had become established, and the inflectional endings had no longer a real value. True, from the force of habit, they continued long in use, just as in spelling we retain letters which have ceased to be pronounced; but when it was once distinctly felt that the syntactical relations of words had come to depend on precedence and sequence, the cases and other now useless grammatical signs were neglected, confounded, and finally dropped, as were the original symbols of the larger numbers in the Arabic notation, when it was discovered that position alone might be made to indicate the value of the factors of which the digits were the exponents.*

The principle, that the grammatical categories of the words in a

* See an explanation of the origin of the decimal notation in a note to Humboldt's Kosmos.

period are determined by their relative positions, is the true characteristic of English as distinguished from Saxon, and if we could fix the epoch at which this principle became the controlling law of construction, we could assign a date to the origin of the English language as a new linguistic individual.

Regel considers the orthography of this proclamation so important that, in an article in the second number of the eleventh volume of Haupt, he devotes no less than eight and twenty closely printed octavo pages to an examination of it. Were I convinced of the soundness of these speculations, the present would not be a fit place for the exhibition of the results arrived at by this writer; but, however ingenious may be his views, it appears to me that, in the excessive irregularity of all orthography at that period, we may find sufficient reason for doubting whether we are yet in possession of sufficient data to justify any positive conclusions on the relations between the spoken and the written tongue of England in the middle of the thirteenth century.*

* We can never determine, by internal evidence, whether changes in orthography are contemporaneous with changes in pronunciation, and it is only in a very few recent cases that we have any external evidence on the subject. The presumption is always that the spelling remained unaltered long after the spoken word had become very different in articulation.

If we compare the orthography of our time with that of Shakspeare's age, we find very considerable changes, and we know that English pronunciation has been much modified since that period. (See the evidence on this subject in First Series, Lecture XXII.) But the changes in spelling have not, in general, been made for the purpose of bringing the written into closer accordance with the spoken tongue, but for etymological reasons, for convenience of the printer, for uniformity, and in some cases from caprice; nor have we any reason to believe that our present orthography is more truly phonographic than it was two hundred years ago, except, perhaps, so far as it has been made so by dropping the mute *e* in many words.

The Spanish Academy has succeeded in bringing about a revolution in the orthography of the Castilian language, and in this instance, the modern spelling more truly represents the articulation than the old orthography did. The change was not made because the orthoepy had been recently modified, but to make the orthography a more uniform and convenient expression of what had been for a long time the normal pronunciation. This we know historically, but if the discussions on the subject should be lost, posterity might as justly infer, from the internal evidence in the case, that the articulation of the Spanish underwent a sudden change in the first half of the nineteenth century, as we can that the pronunciation of Saxon words in English, in the time of Heury III., differed materially from that employed in the same words at the epoch of the Conquest. And in the same way, leaving the external evidence out of the question, a stranger to Anglo-American usage, observing the general employment of Webster's unhappy cacography in New York newspapers and school books, could come to no other conclusion than that the

The following words seem to require special notice:

VERBS. send, 3 per. indic. sing. is without inflectional ending or other sign of conjugation;—witen, imperative, ends in *n* instead of *e*, which latter was the A.-S. form when the nominative pronoun followed the verb;—willen, with *n* final instead of þ or ð, but beoth and habbeth with the latter sound;—schullen with *n*, as in A.-S.;—hoaten with *n* instead of þ or ð;—healden and swerien, subjunctive, with *n* as in A.-S.;—to healden and to werien, infinitives with *to*, contrary to A.-S.; beon with *n* instead of A.-S. ð;—to makien, gerundial according to A.-S. construction, but without the characteristic *-ne*;—helpe, subjunctive, with *e* as in A.-S.;—to done, gerundial with characteristic ending;—to foangen, gerundial without characteristic ending;—nime, subj. with *e* as in A.-S.;—muge, subj. with *e* as in A.-S.;—cumen, probably subj., with *n* as in A.-S.;—healden, subj. with *n* as in A.-S.;—senden, with *n* for ð;—to halden, gerund. without characteristic.

NOUNS. Igretinge is not a participle, but a noun, *greeting*, Lat. salutem. The *i*, originally an augment of the participle and past tense of the verb, is prefixed also to two other nouns, isetnesses and ifoan, and to ilæwede, which is probably to be considered as an adjective, though not, like ilærde, a participial; besigte is allied to *sight*, and therefore etymologically corresponds to *provision*.

ADJECTIVES. moare. It is worth noticing, as an instance of the approximation of languages which have long diverged, that the A.-S. mæra and the Latin major, are, in consequence of orthoepic changes, represented in modern English and in Portuguese, respectively, by the same word, more, Eng., mór, Port. In the same way—in pursuance of more remarkable laws of change by which, in the Cimbric of the Sette and the Tredici Comuni, the Ger. *w* becomes *b*, the diphthong *ei* is sounded *o*, and the palatal *ch* is changed into *g*—the German adjective weich is, in Cimbric, spelled and pronounced bog, which agrees in form, and in at least one meaning, with the Celtic bog. See a note on Buck, in the American edition of Wedgwood's Dict. of Eng. Etym. Oni other onie, Regel supposes the *e* final in the latter example to be the sign of the plural; others have treated it as a feminine singular ending. The question cannot be determined by the syntax, for the plural might have been used after an alternative, but the distinction of

people of the American commercial metropolis had lately become so lamentably depraved in speech as to talk of *trāvc-lers*, of dissolute *rēve-lers*, and of *lūhc-ling* smuggled goods.

grammatical gender was now so little regarded that the *e* is, most probably, a plural sign. The orginal French of the proclamation, which, unfortunately, my authority does not give, would decide this question.

PARTICLES. Of had not yet become well recognised as a sign of the genitive or possessive, and the document presents several instances of a confusion between this particle and on, *in*. On, in the address, must have represented the French de, while, in the body of the proclamation, the same preposition is translated by *of*;—a buten aende, Pauli had printed abuten aende, treating abuten as a single word. Regel, upon the authority of numerous passages in Semi-Saxon MSS., rightly separates them. *a* is an adverb, the modern *aye*, forever.

One of the most famous among the fictions of the Middle Ages, which were made familiar to the English people of the thirteenth century by a vernacular translation, was the story of Alexander the Great. The remarkable exploits of this famous captain filled the world with his renown, in his own short lifetime; but the splendour of his victories was for a time eclipsed by the perhaps greater achievements, and the certainly more permanent conquests, of Roman generals, and, during a period of some centuries, his fame passed quite out of the popular memory of Europe. After the downfall of the Roman Empire, his forgotten glory was revived on the Levantine shores of the Mediterranean, and then in Western Europe, not in consequence of the increasing study of classical authors, but by an echo from the literature of far-off countries, where Rome had won but transient and doubtful triumphs. The name and exploits of Secunder Dhulkarnein *, or the two-horned Alexander, seem

* May not this Oriental epithet be the origin of the word *dulcarnon*, which has proved too hard a problem for Chaucer's commentators to solve? Alexander was known to the Middle Ages as the great hero of the heathen world, the paynim par excellence, and it is not at all probable that the signification of Dhulkarnein was familiar to them. The meaning *heathen* would precisely suit the word in the passage in Stanihurst's Ireland, referred to by Halliwell as suggesting an explanation of Chaucer's *dulcarnon*. Stanihurst, in Holinshed, vol. vi. p. 36, reprint of 1808, speaking of the conversion of the people of Ulster by St. Patrick, says: "S. Patrike, considering that these sealie soules were (as all *dulcarnanes* for the more part are) more to be terrified from infidelitie through the paines of hell, than allured to Christianitie by the ioies of heauen," &c. &c.

never to have been obscured in the East, and, in the Middle Ages, translations of Oriental romances founded on his life, and imitations of them, constituted an important feature in the literature of every European people possessing a written speech.

The most celebrated and popular, though not the earliest, of these poems, was the Alexandreis of Philip Gautier, of Lille, or Chatillon, which was composed, as appears from internal evidence, between the years 1170—1201. This is modelled mainly after Curtius, and is written in Latin hexameters. It served as the prototype of numerous versions and paraphrases in many languages, and was even translated into Old-Northern or Icelandic prose, by command of Magnus Hakonsson, a Norwegian king, about the middle of the thirteenth century.

Several of the translations or imitations of Gautier's work were written in verses of twelve syllables, or six iambic feet, which were probably thought the nearest approximation to the classic hexameter practicable in modern poetry*; and it is said

Dulcarnon occurs twice in Troilus and Creseide, iiiv. 914, 916. Creseide says:

And, eme, ywis, faine would I don the best,
If that I grace had for to do so,
But whether that ye dwell, or for him go,
I am, till God me better minde send,
At *dulcarnon*, right at my wittes end.

Pandarus replies:

Ye, nece, wol ye here,
Dulcarnon is called fleming of wretches,
It semeth herd, for wretches wol nought lere,
For very slouth, or other wilful tetches,
This is said by hem that be not worth two fetches,
But ye ben wise, and that ye han on hond,
N' is neither harde, ne skilfull to withstond.

Here the sense of dullness or stupidity, so commonly ascribed to the heathen, is plainly implied, though it must be admitted that the precise sense of the phrases in which the word occurs is not easily made out.

* The earliest attempt at imitation of the classical hexameter which I have met with in English is a rhymed couplet translated from Virgil in Purvey's

that *alexandrine*, as a designation of a particular metre, took its name from its employment in these popular and widely circulated poems. Chaucer, though he does not himself write in this verse, speaks of it, under the name of *exametron*, as a common heroic measure.

> Tregedis is to sayn a certeyn storie,
> As olde bookes maken us memorie,
> Of hem that stood in gret prosperité,
> And is yfallen out of heigh degré
> In to miserie, and endith wrecchedly.
> And thay ben versifyed comunly
> Of six feet, which men clepe *exametron*.
>
> *Monkes Tale*, Prologue.

The old English poem of Kyng Alisaunder is, however, not in the same metre as most of the Romance poems on the same subject, but in a very irregular rhymed verse of seven or eight, and sometimes more syllables. It is not a translation of the work of Gautier, but of some French poem now unknown, so that we have not the means of determining how far it is merely a faithful version, or how far it was modified by the translator. The story, as narrated in Kyng Alisaunder, does not rest upon classical authority, but is, much more probably, made up from the spurious Alexander of Callisthenes and other mediæval translations from Oriental romances, and from confused Eastern traditions brought home by pilgrims and crusaders.* That it is

version of Jerome's prologue to his Latin Bible. Wycliffite Versions, I. 67, where it is printed as prose:

> Now maide turneth aȝe, Saturnus turneth his rewmes;
> Now newe kyn cometh fre, from an hiȝ, fro heuenli lewmes.

* The work which, in the Middle Ages, passed under the name of Callisthenes, is known to have been translated from the Persian into Greek about the year 1070, by Simon Seth, an officer of the court of Constantinople in the reign of Michael Ducas. See Weber's Metrical Romances, vol. i., Introduction, p. xx.

The intercourse between Western Europe and the Levant, which became so frequent soon after this date, introduced this romance to the Latin nations, and, by means of translations, it was soon generally diffused among a public in which the wars for the recovery of the Holy Sepulchre had excited a new interest in the history and the geography of the East. The wide popularity which this feeling

substantially a translation, or at least an imitation, and not an original English composition, satisfactorily appears from a variety of passages, and among others from this:

> This batail destuted is,
> In the French, wel y-wis,
> Therefore Y have, hit to colour,
> Borowed of the Latyn autour.
>
> 2199—2202.

To what Latin author reference is here made, does not appear, but it is not probable that it was Gautier, for if the translator had been familiar with that author, he would hardly have failed to introduce into his work some notice of the death of Thomas à Becket, who was so popular a saint in England in the thirteenth century, and whose martyrdom, as some of his admirers both ancient and modern choose to call it, is mentioned by Gautier.

The author professes to enumerate his sources at the commencement of chap. i. of Part II., but it is quite evident that he knew little or nothing of the real works of the writers he specifies, or of the authorship of the manuscripts he used, and the testimony of all 'Latin books' was, in his eyes, of equal weight.

The list of authorities, in which the form of the names shows it to be a translation from the French, is as follows*: —

> Thoo Alisaunder went thorough desert,
> Many wondres he seigh apert,
> Whiche he dude wel descryue
> By good clerkes in her lyue;
> By Aristotle his maister that was;
> Better clerk sithen non nas.

secured to the story served to stimulate still further the curiosity and the enthusiasm of Europe, and many a warrior of the cross dreamed of victories as brilliant, and conquests as extensive, as those of Alexander. But this and other romances did another and better service, by turning the attention of scholars to the more authentic sources of historical information respecting the life of Alexander, which were to be found in Curtius and other Latin authors, and thus contributed, in some degree, to the revival of a taste for classic literature.

* Weber, Metrical Romances, I. pp. 199, 200.

He was with hym, and seigh, and wroot
Alle thise wondres, (God it woot!),
Salomon, that all the werlde thorough yede,
In sooth witnesse helde hym myde.
Ysidre also, that was so wys,
In his bokes telleth this.
Maister Eustroge bereth hym witnesse
Of the wondres more and lesse.
Seint Jerome, yee shullen y-wyte,
Hem hath also in book y-wryte;
And Magestene, the gode clerk,
Hath made therof mychel werk.
Denys, that was of gode memorie,
It sheweth al in his book of storie;
And also Pompie, of Rome lorde,
Dude it writen every worde.
Beheldeth me therof no fynder;
Her bokes ben my shewer,
And the lyf of Alysaunder,
Of whom fleigh so riche sklaunder.

The 'Lyf of Alysaunder' here referred to is very probably the work falsely ascribed to Callisthenes, who is not mentioned by name among the writers from whom the author drew.

The most interesting and really poetical features of this romance are the few couplets of descriptive and sentimental verse, introduced at the commencement of the divisions of the story. These have, in general, no connection with the narrative, and, as far as we can judge by internal evidence, are interpolations by the translator, and therefore probably original English compositions. Thus Part I. chap. ii.:

Averil is meory, and longith the day;
Ladies loven solas, and play;
Swaynes, justes; knyghtis, turnay;
Syngith the nyghtyngale, gredeth theo jay;
The hote sunne chongeth[1] the clay,
As ye well y-seen may.

[1] *chongeth* is probably an error of the pen or press for *clongeth* or *clingeth*, makes to crack by drying and shrinkage. It is not in Coleridge.

Chapter IV.

When corn ripeth in every steode,
Mury hit is in feld and hyde; [1]
Synne hit is and schame to chide;
Knyghtis wollith on huntyng ride;
The deor galopith by wodis side.
He that can his time abyde,
Al his wille him shal bytyde.

Chapter V.

Mury time is the weod to sere; [2]
The corn riputh in the ere:
The lady is rody in the chere;
And maide bryght in the lere; [3]
The knighttes hunteth after dere,
On fote and on destrere.

Chapter VI.

Clere and faire the somerys day spryng,
And makith mony departyng
Bytweone knyght and his swetyng.
Theo sunne ariseth, and fallith the dewyng;
Theo nesche clay hit makith clyng.
Mony is jolif in the mornyng,
And tholeth deth or the evenyng!
N' is in this world so siker thyng
So is deth, to olde and yyng!
The tyme is nygh of heore wendyng.

Chapter VII.

Ofte springeth the bryghte morwe
Mony to blisse, and mony to sorwe;
Qued hit is muche to borwe:
And worse hit is ever in sorwe.
Tho that can nought beon in pes,
Ofte they maken heom evel at ese.

Chapter X.

In tyme of May hot is in boure;
Divers, in medewe, spryngith floure;

[1] *hyde* is a measure of land, a field. Perhaps here it is *heath*.
[2] *the weod to sere;* to dry and burn the weeds or stubble.
[3] *lere*, countenance, A.-S. hleor.

The ladies, knyghtis honourith;
Treowe love in heorte durith,
Ac nede coward byhynde kourith;
Theo large geveth; the nythyng lourith;
Gentil man his leman honourith,
In burgh, in cité, in castel, in toure.

Chapter XII.

Mury hit is in sonne-risyng?
The rose openith and unspryng;
Weyes fairith, the clayes clyng;
The maideues flourith, the foulis syng;
Damosele makith mornyng,
Whan hire leof makith pertyng.

These passages, it will be observed, as well as the others of similar character which occur in the poem, nearly all refer to a time or season of the day or year, but they are introduced without any regard to the period of the occurrences the narrative of which they introduce. They have much the air of having been composed as poetical embellishments of a calendar or almanack, and I suspect them to have been taken from some such work — perhaps a previous production of the translator himself — instead of having been written expressly for introduction into his version of the Romance of Alexander.

The geography and the history, natural and military, of this poem, are of about equal value, as will appear from the following extracts:

There is another ydle hatt Gangerides
There ben jnne castels and of poeple pres;
Hy beeth also mychel and bolde,
As childe of seven yeres elde,
Hy ne ben no more verreyment:
Ac hy ben of body faire and gent;
Hy ben natheles faire and wighth,
And gode and engyneful to fighth,
And have horses auenaunt,
To hem stalworthe and asperaunt.

Clerkes hy ben with the best
Of alle men hy ben queyntest;
And evermore hy beth werrende;
And upon other conquerrende;
By the mone and by the sterren,
Hy connen jugge all werren.
Hy ben the altherbest
That ben from est into west;
For hy connen shete the gripes fleigheyng
And the dragons that ben brennyng.

Verses 4862—4881.

Michel is the wonder that is vnder Crist Jesus.
There byonden is an hyll is cleped Malleus.
Listneth now to me I praie for my loue!
This hyll is so heie that nothing cometh aboue;
The folk on the north-half in thester stede hy beth,
For in al the yer no sunne hy ne seeth.
Hy on the south-half ne seen sonne non
Bot in on moneth, atte fest of Seint John;
Thoo that woneth in the est partie,
The sonne and the hote skye
Al the day hem shyneth on
That hy ben black so pyccches som.

Verses 4902—4913.

Ac thoo hem aroos a vyle meschaunce
Kyng Alisaunder to gret greuaunce.
Ypotamos comen flyngynge,
Out of roches, loude nayinge,
Grete bestes and griselich,
More than olifaunz sikerliche.
Into the water hy shoten onon
And freten[1] the knighttes everychon.

Verses 5164—5170.

The gode clerk, men cleped Solim,
Hath y-writen in his latin,
That ypotame a wonder beest is
More than an olifaunt, I wis;

[1] *freten*, devour.

Toppe, and rugge,[1] and croupe, and cors,
Is semblabel to an hors.
A short beek, and a croked tayl
He hath, and bores tussh, saunz fayle;
Blak is his heued as pycche.
It is a beeste ferliche;
It wil al fruyt ete,
Applen, noten, reisyns, and whete.
Ac mannes flesshe, and mannes bon
It loueth best of everychon.

Verses 5182—5195.

Theo delfyns woneth hire byside;
A strong best of gret pryde.
They haveth schuldren on the rygge,
Eche as scharpe as sweordis egge.
Whan the delfyn the cokadrill seoth,
Anon togedre wroth the buth,
And smyteth togedre anon ryght,
And makith thenne a steorne fyght,
Ac the delfyn is more queynter,
And halt him in the water douner;
And whan theo kocadrill him over swymmeth,
He rerith up his brustelis grymme,
And his wombe al to-rent;
Thus is the cokadrill y-schent,
And y-slawe of theo delfyn.
God geve ows god fyn!

Verses 6610—6625.

The syntactical construction and inflections of this poem would indicate a higher antiquity than its vocabulary, the latter of which abounds in French words, while the syntax seems to belong to a period when English had as yet borrowed little from the Norman tongue. Thus I find that in the eighth chapter of the first part more than six per cent. of the words, exclusive of proper names, are French. Several Scandinavian words also make their first appearance in English in this romance, though the syntax shows no trace of Old-Northern influence. Thus *haume* is the Icelandic hamr, a disguise, generally the form of an animal, assumed by magic power; —*onde*, breath, is Icel. andi; —*or-*

[1] *rugge*, back.

ped, valiant, is thought to be the Icel. participle orpinn, from verpa, to throw, but as orpinn is not used in this sense in Icelandic, the etymology is at least doubtful; —*punge*, purse, is the Icel. púngr.

An important work, sometimes ascribed to a more ancient date, but I believe pretty certainly belonging to this century, is The Owl and Nightingale, a rhyming poem of about eighteen hundred verses, in octosyllabic iambic metre. This has not been traced to any foreign source, and is probably of native invention,—a circumstance which invests it with some interest, as the earliest known narrative poem, of a wholly imaginative character, conceived in the native tongue after the Saxon period.

It is a dispute between an owl and a nightingale concerning their respective powers of song. The smoothness of the versification shows a practised ear, and of course a familiarity with foreign models, for English verse had hardly been yet cultivated extensively enough to furnish the requisite training. The vocabulary contains few Norman words, but many of Scandinavian origin, while its dialectic peculiarities, such as the substitution of *v* for the initial *f*, do not indicate that the poem was composed in a northern or north-eastern district. The dialogue, though neither elegant nor refined, is not wanting in spirit, and the general tone of the composition is in advance of that of the period to which other evidence, internal and external, assigns it.

The commencement is as follows:—

Ich was in one sumere dale,
In one suthe diȝele hale,[1]
I-herde ich holde grete tale
An hule and one niȝtingale.
That plait was stif and starc and strong,
Sum wile softe, and lud among;

[1] *Suthe diȝele hale*, very retired or secret hollow.

An aither azen other sval,[1]
And let that wole[2] mod ut al.
And either seide of otheres custe[3]
That alre-worste that hi wuste;
And hure and hure of othere sunge
He holde plaiding suthe stronge.

The nizingale bi-gon the speche,
In one hurne[4] of one breche[5];
And sat upone vaire boze,
Thar were abute blosme i-noze,
In ore[6] waste thicke hegge,
I-meind[7] mid spire and grene segge,
Ho was the gladur vor the rise,[8]
And song a vele cunne wise:[9]

Het thuzte the dreim[10] that he were
Of harpe and pipe, thau he nere,
Bet thuzte that he were i-shote
Of harpe and pipe than of throte.

Tho stod on old stoc thar bi-side,
Thar tho ule song hire tide,
And was mid ivi al bi-growe,
Hit was thare hule earding-stowe.[11]

The nizingale hi i-sez,
And hi bi-hold and over-sez,
An thuzte wel wl[12] of thare hule.
For me[13] hihalt lodlich[14] and fule:
"Unwizt," ho sede, "awey thu flo!
Me is the wrs[15] that ich the so;
I-wis for thine wle lete[16]
Wel oft ich mine song for-lete;
Min horte at-flith, and falt mi tonge,
Thonne thu art to me i-thrunge.[17]

[1] *sval*, swelled with indignation. [2] *wole*, evil. [3] *custe*, Icel. kostr, habits, character, conditions. [4] *hurne*, corner. [5] *breche*, Coleridge suggests *beech*, here beech-grove. [6] *ore*, one, *a*. [7] *i-meind*, mingled. [8] *rise*, branches. [9] *song a vele cunne wise*, probably, sung many kinds of notes; *wise*, Ger. Weise. [10] *Het thuzte the dreim*, it seemed the tone; *Bet thuzte*, it seemed rather. [11] *earding-stowe*, dwelling-place. [12] *wl*, ill. [13] *me*, men, Fr. on. [14] *lodlich*, loathsome. [15] *wrs*, worse. [16] *lete*, voice. [17] *i-thrunge*, pressed near.

Me lust bet[1] speten, thane singe
Of thine fule ȝoȝelinge."[2]
Thos hule abod fort hit was eve,
Ho ne miȝte no leng bileve,
Vor hire horte was so gret,
That wel neȝ hire fnast[3] at-schet;
And warp a word thar after longe:
"Hu thincthe nu bi mine songe?
West thu that ich ne cunne singe,
Theȝ ich ne cunne of writelinge?
I-lome[4] thu dest me grame,[5]
And seist me bothe tone[6] and schame;
ȝif ich the holde on mine note,[7]
So hit bi-tide that ich mote!
And thu were ut of thine rise,
Thu sholdest singe an other wse.'[8]

After much reciprocal abuse, the nightingale bursts into song.

Thos word aȝaf the niȝtingale,
And after thare longe tale
He song so lude and so scharpe,
Riȝt so me grulde schille harpe,[9]
Thos hule luste thider-ward,
And hold here eȝe nother-ward,
And sat to-svolle and i-bolye,[10]
Also ho hadde one frogge i-svolȝe.

The birds then agree, upon the proposal of the nightingale to refer the question of superiority to 'Maister Nichole of Guldeforde,' who

is wis and war of worde;
He is of dome suthe gleu,[11]
And him is loth evrich untheu;

[1] *me lust bet*, I would rather. [2] *ȝoȝelinge*, chattering. [3] *fnast*, breath. [4] *i-lome*, often. [5] *grame*, offence. [6] *tone*, pain, wrong, injury. [7] *note*, power, possession. [8] *wse*, wise, manner. [9] *riȝt so me grulde schille harpe*, as if one were touching a shrill harp. [10] *i-bolye*, swollen. [11] *gleu*, skilfull.

He wot insiȝt in eche songe,
Wo singet wel, wo singet wronge;
And he can schede[1] vrom the riȝte
That woȝe,[2] that thuster[3] from the liȝte.

Before repairing to the arbiter, however, they recommence their dialogue, and the poem is almost entirely taken up with their abuse of each other, the nightingale beginning the dispute.

'Hule,' ho sede, 'seie me soth,
Wi dostu that un-wiȝtis doth?
Thu singist a niȝt, and noȝt a dai,
And al thi song is wailawai;
Thu miȝt mid thine songe afere
Alle that i-hereth thine i-bere;[4]
Thu schirchest and ȝollest to thine fere[5]
That hit is grislich to i-here,
Hit thinchest bothe wise and snepe[6]
Noȝt that thu singe, ac that thu wepe.
Thu fliȝst a niȝt and noȝt a dai;
Tharof ich wndri, and wel mai:
Vor evrich thing that schuniet riȝt,
Hit luveth thuster and hatiet liȝt.'

The owl replies much in the same strain, and, as will be seen by the following extracts, the two birds continue to abuse each other, in good set terms, to the end of the poem. The owl:—

Thu wenist that ech song bo[7] grislich
That thine pipinge nis i-lich:
Mi stefne[8] is bold and noȝt un-orne,[9]
Ho is i-lich one grete horne,
And thin is i-lich one pipe
Of one smale wode un-ripe.
Ich singe bet than thu dest;
Thu chaterest so doth on Irish preost;

[1] *schede*, distinguish. [2] *woȝe*, wrong. [3] *thuster*, darkness. [4] *i-bere*, voice. [5] *fere*, mate. [6] *snepe*, foolish. [7] *bo*, be. [8] *stefne*, voice. [9] *un-orne*, rude.

Ich singe an eve a riȝt time,
And soththe won hit is bed-time,
The thridde sithe ad middel niȝte,
And so ich mine song adiȝte
Wone ich i-so[1] arise vorre
Other dai-rim[2] other dai-sterre,
Ich do god mid mine throte,
And warne men to hore note.[3]
Ac thu singest alle-longe niȝt,
From eve fort hit is dai-liȝt,
And evre seist thin o song
So longe so the niȝt is long,
And evre croweth thi wrecche crei
That he ne swiketh night ne dai;
Mid thine pipinge thu adunest[4]
Thas monnes earen thar thu wunest,
And makest thine song so un-wrth
That me ne telth of thar noȝt wrth.
Everich murȝthe mai so longe i-leste,
That ho shal like wel un-wreste;[5]
Vor harpe and pipe and fuȝeles songe
Misliketh, ȝif hit is to long,
Ne bo the song never so murie,
That he shal thinche wel un-murie,
Zef he i-lesteth over un-wille.[6]

The nightingale: —

'Hule,' ho seide, 'wi dostu so?
Thu singest a winter wolawo;
Thu singest so doth hen a snowe,[7]
Al that ho singeth hit is for wowe;
Hit is for thine fule nithe,[8]
That thu ne miȝt mid us bo blithe,
For thu forbernest[9] wel neȝ for onde[10]
Than ure blisse cumeth to-londe.

[1] *i-so*, see. [2] *dai-rim*, day-break, dawn. [3] *note*, good, benefit, labour. [4] *adunest*, stunnest, dinnest. [5] *un-wreste*, worthless. [6] *over un-wille*, beyond what is desirable. [7] *so doth hen a snowe*, like a hen in the snow. [8] *nithe*, envy. [9] *forbernest*, burnest. [10] *onde*, malice.

Thu farest so doth the ille,
Evrich blisse him is un-wille;
Grucching and luring him both[1] rade,[2]
Lif he i-soth that men both glade;
He wolde that he i-seȝe
Teres in evrich monnes eȝe:
Ne roȝte he theȝ flockes were
I-meind bi toppes and bi here.[3]
Al so thu dost on thire side;
Vor wanne snou lith thicke and wide
An all wiȝtes habbeth sorȝe,
Thu singest from eve fort a morȝe.
Ac ich alle blisse mid me bringe;
Ech wiȝt is glad for mine thinge,
And blisseth hit wanne ich cume,
And hiȝteth aȝen mine cume.
The blostme ginneth springe and sprede
Both in tro and eke on mede;
The lilie mid hire faire wlite[4]
Wolcumeth me, that thu hit wte,
Bid me mid hire faire blo[5]
That ich shulle to hire flo;[6]
The rose also mid hire rude,
That cumeth ut of the thorne wode,
Bit me that ich shulle singe
Vor hire luve one skentinge.[7]

The owl:—

Wi nultu singe an oder theode,[8]
War hit is muchele more neode?
Thu neaver ne singst in Irlonde,
Ne thu ne cumest noȝt in Scotlonde:
Wi nultu fare to Noreweie?
And singin men of Galeweie?
Thar beodh men that lutel kunne
Of songe that is bineodhe the sunne;

[1] *both, beeth*, is. [2] *rade*, ready, present. [3] *flockes* * * *i-meind bi toppes and by here*, companies * * quarrelling and pulling hair. [4] *wlite*, colour. [5] *blo*, bleo, blee, colour. [6] *flo*, flee. [7] *skentinge*, a merry song. [8] *theode*, place, people.

Wi nultu thare preoste singe,
An teche of thire writelinge?
And wisi[1] hom mid thire stevene,
The engeles singeth ine heovene?
Thu farest so dodh an ydel wel,
That springeth bi burne thar is snel,[2]
An let for-drue[3] the dune,[4]
And floh on idel thar a-dune.

The disputants become irritated, and are about to proceed to violence, when the wren, who

for heo cuthe singe,
War com in thare morezeiing,
To helpe thare nizztegale,

interferes, reminds the parties of their agreement to refer their differences to an arbiter, and sends them to abide his judgment. The poem concludes: —

Mid thisse worde forth hi ferden,
Al bute here and bute verde,[5]
To Portersham that heo bi-come;
Ah hu heo spedde of heore dome
Ne chan ich eu namore telle;
Her nis namore of this spelle.

The Geste of Kyng Horn, a romantic poem of about sixteen hundred verses, belongs to the thirteenth century, and has not been traced to a foreign original; but the existence of nearly contemporaneous versions of the same story, in French and other languages, renders it highly probable that the first conception of the poem was of a much earlier date.

The following is a condensed outline of the plan. King Murray, the father of Horn, the hero of the tale, is defeated and slain by heathen, or, as the poet calls them, *Saracen*,

[1] *wisi*, show, teach. [2] *snel*, swift. [3] *for-drue*, dry-up. [4] *dune*, the heath. [5] *Al bute here and bute verde*, without army and troops, that is without followers or retinue.

vikings, from Denmark, who seize Horn, and put to death all his countrymen, except such as consent to renounce Christianity. Horn is compelled to put to sea in a small boat, with several companions, and lands in Westernesse, where he is hospitably received by King Aylmer, is carefully educated in all the accomplishments of a page, and excites a strong passion in the breast of Rimenhild, the only daughter of the King.

After being dubbed knight, he departs in quest of adventures, and, aided by a magic ring given him by the princess, he defeats a party of Saracen vikings, and carries the head of the chief to King Aylmer, but is exiled by that prince, who is not disposed to favour his love for Rimenhild. On taking leave of his mistress, he begs her to wait seven years for his return, and gives her liberty to accept the hand of another suitor unless she has a satisfactory account of him within that period. During his absence, he meets with a variety of adventures, but is finally sent for by Rimenhild, and arrives in time to rescue her from King Modi, who is pressing for her hand, and Horn and Rimenhild are married. After the marriage, he goes with a troop of Irish soldiery to Suddene, his native land, which he recovers from the infidels. He finds his mother, who had concealed herself in a cave at the time of his capture, still alive, and returns to Westernesse. During his absence, his false friend Fykenild, who had occasioned his former banishment, had got possession of Rimenhild, and was trying to compel her to consent to a marriage with him. Horn enters Fykenild's castle in the disguise of a harper, kills the traitor, and recovers his wife. The poem commences thus: —

Alle beon he blipe,
Þat to my song lyþe:
A sang ihc schal ȝou singe
Of Murry þe kinge.
King he was bi weste
So longe so hit laste.
Godhild het his quen;
Faire ne miȝte non ben.

He hadde a sone, þat het Horn;
Fairer ne miȝte non beo born,
Ne no rein upon birine,
Ne sunne upon bischine;
Fairer nis non þane he was,
He was so briȝt so þe glas;
He was whit so þe flur,
Rose red was his colur.
He was feyr and eke bold,
Ant of fiftene wynter old,
In none kinge riche
Nas non his iliche.
Twelf feren he hadde
Þat alle with hem ladde;
Alle riche mannes sones,
And alle hi were faire gomes;
Wiþ him for to pleie:
And mest he luvede tweie,
Þat on him het Haþulf child,
And þat oþer Fykenild.
Aþulf was þe beste,
And Fikenylde þe werste.

When Horn lands from the boat into which he had been driven to embark by the heathen pirates, he takes leave of it with this benediction: —

Schup, bi þe se flode
Daies have þu gode;
Bi þe se brinke
No water þe nadrinke.
Ȝef þu cume to Suddene,
Gret þu wel of myne kenne;
Gret þu wel my moder,
Godhild quen þe gode;
And seie þe paene kyng,
Jesu Cristes wiþering,
Þat ihc am hol and fer,
On this lond arived her;
And seie þat hei schal fonde
Þe dent of myne honde.

King Aylmer meets Horn and his companions soon after they land, and, after hearing their story, conducts them to the palace, and gives them into the charge of his steward Aþelbrus, with these instructions:—

Stiward, tak nu here
Mi fundlyng, for to lere
Of þine mestere,
Of wude and of rivere;
And tech him to harpe
Wiþ his nayles scharpe;
Bivore me to kerve,
And of þe cupe serve;
Þu tech him of alle þe liste
Þot þu evre of wiste;
In his feiren þou wise
Into oþere servise.
Horn þu undervonge,
And tech him of harpe and songe.

At his parting from Rimenhild, she gives him a ring, with these words:—

'Knizt,' quaþ heo, 'trewe,
Ihc mene ihc mei þe leue.[1]
Tak nu her þis gold ring,
God him is þe dubbing.[2]
Þer is upon þe ringe
I-grave Rymenhild þe zonge;
Þer nis non betere an onder sunne,
Þat eni mon of telle cunne.
For mi luve þu hit were,
And on þi finger þu him bere.
Þe stones beoþ of such grace,
Þet pu nė schalt in none place
Of none duntes[3] beon of drad,
Ne on bataille beon amad,[4]
Ef þu loke þer an,
And þenke upon þi lemman.

[1] *leue*, leve, believe. [2] *dubbing*, finishing, or setting, or perhaps it refers to the device engraved upon the stone, or the magic powers conferred upon it. [3] *duntes*, dints, blows. [4] *amad*, dismayed.

The Geste of Kyng Horn has very little merit as a poem, and it is far from possessing the philological importance which has sometimes been ascribed to it. There are, however, besides the words explained in the preceding notes, a few vocables and combinations which deserve notice, because, if I am not mistaken, they are not found in any earlier English work. Thus, *alone* occurs in its primitive form in verse 626:—

> Þo gunne þe hundes gone
> Abute Horn *al one*.[1]

But in verses 861 and 1055 it is written, as at present, *alone;* and in verse 539 we find the more ancient simple *one*, used without the *all:*—

> Nolde he noȝt go *one*,
> Aþulf was his mone.

At one, the probable origin of the modern verb *to atone*, which is supposed to be not older than the sixteenth century, appears in the verse 953:—

> *At on* he was wiþ þe king
> Of þat ilke wedding.

There is, in couplet 545, 546, a singular compound rhyme, which I have not observed in any other poem of the thirteenth century, and which, though a departure from the laws of harmonious consonance, seems to have been a favourite with old English poets, for it is several times employed by Chaucer, Gower, and Occleve:—

> Kniȝt, nu is þi *time*
> For to sitte *bi me*.

The French words, counting repetitions, constitute about two per cent. of the vocabulary, and they are principally from the secular literature of the Continent. The Scandinavian words are few. The meaning and Northern origin of one of them, *fer*, v. 155, appear to have escaped the glossarists. It is evidently the Danish för, Icel. fœrr, which the Scandinavian etymologists refer to the verb at fara, the primitive meaning being *able to walk, active.* The more modern sense is *strong, well,* and in the passage cited, *hol and fer* evidently signifies *safe and sound. Boy*, a word for which no satisfactory etymology has been suggested, occurs in verse 1107, but as it is applied to the porter of a castle, it is used rather in the Irish, than in the modern English sense.*

[1] See on the word *alone*, First Series, Appendix, p. 696, also Lecture XI., *post.*

* I regret to say that, with every possible effort, I have been unable to procure a copy of Havelok the Dane, and I prefer rather to omit all notice of it than to

Another interesting production of the period under consideration is the metrical version of the psalms, published by the Surtees Society. The date of this translation is unknown, but it can hardly be later than the first half of the thirteenth century, though I believe no manuscript copy older than the middle of the reign of Edward II. is known to exist. Its diction resembles in many respects the dialect of the Owl and the Nightingale, but an important grammatical distinction is that it generally uses the Danish plural *ere* instead of *ben*, *beth* or *beoth*, and another is that for the Anglo-Saxon ending of the verb in *-th*, in the indicative present, third person singular, and all persons of the plural, as also in the imperative, it substitutes *s*. Chaucer employs this form in the Reeves Tale, as a peculiarity of the speech of two persons from the North of England:—

> Of o toun were they born that hightе Strothir,
> Fer in the North,

and it has sometimes been said to characterise the dialects of districts where the Scandinavian element is most perceptible. But it is highly improbable that this change is due to Danish influence; for the Danes did not make the corresponding inflections of their own verb in *s*, and, though what is absurdly called the *hard* sound of *th* (as in *think*) is extinct in the normal pronunciation of Danish, yet there is no reason to believe that it became so until long after the last Danish invasion of England.

The origin of the new form is obscure, and at present not historically demonstrable, but it is perhaps to be found in the difficulty of the pronunciation of the *th*. The substantive verb *to be*, which occurs more frequently than any other verb, had always the third person singular, indicative present and past, in *s*, for *is* and *wæs* were used in Anglo-Saxon just as they are now. The Normans could not pronounce *th*, and in attempting

borrow an account of it at second hand. The extracts I have seen do not lead me to concur in the opinions which have been sometimes expressed concerning the high philological importance of this work.

it, a Frenchman gives it the *s* or rather *z* sound which *s* most usually has as a verbal ending. It seems to me, therefore, not improbable, that this Norman-French error in articulation, combined with the fact that the most important of all verbs, the verb *to be*, already employed *s* as the ending of the third person singular, occasioned its general adoption as the characteristic of that inflection.*

I select as a specimen of this translation, Psalm CII. (CIII. of the standard English version), and, for the purpose of comparisons which I leave the student to make for himself, I accompany this text, numbered **3**, with 1, the Anglo-Saxon metrical version; 2, the older Wycliffite, or Hereford's, prose translation; 4, the Latin, from the Surtees Psalter; and 5, a French prose translation, of the twelfth century, published by F. Michel in 1860.

I.

1. Bletsa, mine sawle, bliðe drihten;
2. Blesse thou, my soule, to the Lord;
3. Blisse, my saule, to Laverd ai isse;
4. Benedic, anima mea, Dominum;
5. Beneis, la meie aneme, à nostre Segnor;

1. and eall min inneran his þæne ecean naman!
2. and all thingus that withinne me ben, to his holi name!
3. And alle þat with in me ere, to hali name hisse!
4. et omnia interiora mea nomen sanctum ejus!
5. e tres-tutes les coses qui dedenz mei sunt, al saint num de lui!

II.

1. Bletsige, mine sawle, bealde dryhten!
2. Blesse thou, my soule, to the Lord!
3. Blisse, mi saul, to Laverd, of alle thinges!
4. Benedic, anima mea, Dominum!
5. Beneis, la meie aneme, à nostre Segnor!

1. ne wylt þu ofergeottul æfre weorðan.
2. and wile thou not forȝete alle the ȝeldingus of him.
3. And nil for-gete alle his for-yheldinges.
4. et noli oblivisci omnes retributiones ejus.
5. e ne voilles oblier tutes les gueredunances de lui.

* See note at the end of this Lecture.

III.

1. He þinum mandædum miltsade eallum;
2. That hath mercy to alle thi wickidnessis;
3. Þat winsomes to alle þine wickenesses;
4. Qui propitius fit omnibus iniquitatibus tuis;
5. Chi at merci de tutes les tues iniquitez;

1. and þine adle ealle gehælde.
2. that helith alle thin infirmytees.
3. þat heles alle þine sekenesses.
4. qui sanat omnes languores tuos.
5. chi sained trestutes les tues enfermetez.

IV.

1. He alysde þin lif leof of forwyrde;
2. That ȝeen bieth fro deth thi lif;
3. þat bies fra sterving þi life derli;
4. Qui redemit de interitu vitam tuam;
5. Chi racated de mort la tue vie;

1. fylde þinne willan fægere mid gode.
2. that crouneth thee in mercy and mercy doingis.
3. þat crounes þe with rewþes and with merci.
4. qui coronat te in miseratione et misericordia.
5. chi coruned tei en misericorde e miseraciuns.

V.

1. He þe gesigefæste soðre miltse
   and þe mildheorte mode getrymede;
2. That fulfilleth in goode thingus thi diseyr;
3. þat filles in godes þi yherninges al;
4. Qui satiat in bonis desiderium tuum;
5. Chi raemplist en bones coses le tuen desiderie;

1. eart þu eadnowe earne gelicast
   on geoguðe nu gleawe geworden.
2. shal be renewid as of an egle thiȝ outhe.
3. Als erne þi yhouthe be newed sal.
4. renovabitur sic ut aquilæ juventus tua.
5. sera renovée sicume d'aigle la tue juvente.

VI.

1. Hafast þu milde mod, mihta strange
drihten,
2. Doende mercies the Lord,
3. Doand mercies Laverd in land,
4. Faciens misericordias Dominus,
5. Faisanz misericordes nostre Sire,

1. domas eallum þe deope her
and ful treaflice teonan þolian.
2. and dom to alle men suffrende wrong.
3. And dome til alle un-right tholand.
4. et judicium omnibus injuriam patientibus.
5. e jugement à tuz torceunerie suffranz.

VII.

1. He his wegas dyde wise and cuðe
Moyse þam mæran on mænige tid;
2. Knowen he made his weies to Moises;
3. Konthe made he to Moises his waies wele;
4. Notas fecit vias suas Moysi;
5. Cuneudes fist les sues veies à Moysen;

1. swylce his willan eac werum Israhela.
2. and to the sones of Irael his willis.
3. His willes til sones of Irael.
4. filiis Israhel voluntates suas.
5. as fils Israel ses voluntez.

VIII.

1. Mildheort þu eart and mihtig, mode geþyldig,
ece dryhten, swa þu a wære,
2. Reewere and merciful the Lord,
3. Rew-ful and milde-herted Laverd gode,
4. Misericors et miserator Dominus,
5. Merciere e merciable nostre Sire,

1. is þin milde mod mannum cyðed.
2. long abidende and mychc merciful.
3. And milde-herted and lang-mode.
4. patiens et multum misericors.
5. pacient e mult merciable.

IX.

1. Nelle þu oð ende yrre habban,
2. In to euermore he shal not wrathen,
3. Nóghte wreth he sal in evermore,
4. Non in finem irascitur,
5. Neient en parmanableted iraistra,

1. ne on ecnesse þe awa belgan.
2. ne in to withoute ende he shal threte.
3. Ne in ai sal he threte þar-fore.
4. neque in æternum indignabitur.
5. ne en pardurableted ne manacera.

X.

1. Na þu be gewyrhtum, wealdend, urum
wommum wyrhtum woldest us don,
2. Aftir oure synnes he dide not to vs,
3. Noght after our sinnes dide he til us,
4. Non secundum peccata nostra fecit nobis,
5. Neient sulunc les noz pecchez fist à nus,

1. ne æfter urum unryhte awhær gyldan.
2. ne aftir oure wickidnessis he ȝelde to us.
3. Ne after our wickenes for-yheld us þus.
4. neque secundum iniquitates nostras retribuit nobis.
5. ne sulunc les noz iniquitez ne reguerednad à nus.

XI.

1. Forþon þu æfter heahweorce heofenes þines
mildheortnysse mihtig drihten,
2. For after the heiȝte of heuene fro erthe,
3. For after heghnes of heven fra land,
4. Quia secundum altitudinem cœli a terra.
5. Kar sulunc la haltece del ciel de la terre,

1. lustum cyðdest þam þe lufedon þe.
2. he strengthide his mercy vpon men dredende hym.
3. Strenghþed he his merci over him dredand.
4. confirmavit Dominus misericordiam suam super timentes eum.
5. esforçad la sue misericorde sur les cremanz sei.

XII.

1. Swa þas foldan fædme bewindeð,
   þes eastrodor and æfter west,
2. Hou myche the rising stant fro the going doun,
3. How mikle est del stand west del fra,
4. Quantum distat oriens ab occasu,
5. Cumbien desestait li naissemenz del dechedement,

1. He betweonan þam teonan and unriht
   us fram afyrde æghwær symble,
2. aferr he made fro vs oure wickidnessis,
3. Fer made he fra us oure wickenes swa.
4. elongavit a nobis iniquitates nostras.
5. luinz fist de nus les noz felunies.

XIII.

1. Swa fæder þenceð fægere his bearnum
   milde weordan,
2. What maner wise the fader hath mercy of the sonus,
3. Als rewed es fadre of sones,
4. Sic ut miseretur pater filiis,
5. Cum faitement at merci li pere des filz,

1. swa us mihtig god
   þam þe hine lufiað, liðe weorðeð.
2. the Lord dide mercy to men dredende hym;
3. Rewed es Laverd, þare he wones,
4. Ita misertus est Dominus
5. merci ad li Sire

3. Of þa þat him dredand be;
4. timentibus se;
5. des cremanz sei;

XIV.

1. forþan he calle can ure þearfe.
2. for he knew oure britil making.
3. Fore our schaft wele knawes he.
4. Quia ipse scit figmentum nostrum.
5. kar il conut la nostre faiture.

1. Gemune, mihtig god, þæt we synt moldan and dust,
2. He recordide for pouder wee be,
3. Mined es he wele in thoght
4. Memento Domine
5. Recorda
3. þat dust ere we and worth noght,
4. quod pulvis sumus,
5. qui nus sumes puldre;

XV.

1. beoð mannes dagas mawenum hege
ælghwer anlice,
2. a man as hey his dazes,
3. Man his daies ere als hai,
4. homo sic ut fænum dies ejus,
5. huem sicume fain li jurz de lui,

1. eorðan blostman
swa his lifdages læne syndan.
2. as the flour of the feld so he shal floure out,
3. Als blome of felde sal he welyen awa.
4. et sic ut flos agri, ita floriet.
5. ensement cume la flur del camp, issi flurira.

XVI.

1. ponne he gast ofgifeð,
2. For the spirit shal thurz passen in hym,
3. For gaste thurgh-fare in him it sal,
4. Quia spiritus pertransiit ab eo,
5. Kar li espiriz trespassera en lui

1. syððan hine gærsbedd sceal
wunian wide-fyrhð,
2. and he shal not stonde stille;
3. And noght undre-stand he sal with-al.
4. et non erit.
5. e ne parmaindra.

1. ne him man syððan wæt
ælghwer elles ænige stowe.
2. and he shal no more knowen his place.
3. And knawe na-mare sal he
4. et non cognoscit amplius
5. e ne cunuistra ampleis

3. His stede, where þat it sal be.
4. locum suum.
5. sun liu.

XVII.

1. þin mildheortnes, mihtig drihten,
purh ealra worulda woruld wislic standeð,
2. The mercy forsothe of the Lord fro withoute ende,
3. And Laverdes merci evre dwelland,
4. Misericordia autem Domini a sæculo est,
5. Mais la misericorde nostre Segnur de parmanableted,

1. deorust and gedefust ofer ealle þa þe ondrædað him,
2. and vnto withoute ende, vpon men dredende hym.
3. And til ai our him dredand.
4. et usque in sæculum sæculi super timentes eum.
5. e desque en parmanableted sur les cremanz lui.

1. Swa his soðfæstnyss swylce standeð
ofer þara bearna bearn,
2. And the rigtwisnesse of hym in to the sones of sones,
3. And in sones of sones his rightwisenes,
4. et justitia ejus super filios filiorum,
5. e la justise de lui ès filz des filz,

XVIII.

1. þe his bebodu healdað;
2. to hem that kepen his testament.
3. To þas þat yhemes wite-word his;
4. custodientibus testamentum ejus;
5. à icels chi guardent le testament de lui;

1. and þæs gemynde mycle habbað
2. And myndeful thei ben
3. And mined sal þai be, night and dai,
4. et memoria retinentibus
5. e remembreur sunt

1. þat heo his wisfæst word wynnum efnan.
2. of his maundemens, to do them.
3. Of his bodes to do þam ai.
4. mandata ejus ut faciant ea.
5. des cumandemenz de lui medesme, à faire les.

XIX.

1. On heofonhame halig drihten
   his heahsetl hror timbrade,
2. The Lord in heuene made redi his sete,
3. Laverd in heven graiþed sete his,
4. Dominus in cœlo paravit sedem suam,
5. Li Sire el ciel aprestad sun siege,

1. þanon he eorðrícum eallum wealdeð.
2. and his reume to alle shal lordshipen.
3. And his rike til alle sal Laverd in blis.
4. et regnum ejus omnium dominabitur.
5. e le regne de lui-medesme à tutes choses segnurerad.

XX.

1. Ealle his englas ecne drihten
   bletsian bealde,
2. Blisse ȝee to the Lord, alle his aungelis,
3. Blisses to Laverd with alle your might,
4. Benedicite Dominum,
5. Beneiseiz le Segnor,
3. Alle his aungels þat ere bright;
4. omnes angeli ejus;
5. tuit li angele de lui;

1. heora bliðne frean
   mægyn and mihta þa his mære word,
   habbað and healdað and hyge fremmað,
2. miȝti bi vertue doende the woord of hym,
3. Mightand of thew, doand his worde swa,
4. potentes virtute, qui facitis verbum ejus,
5. poanz par vertud, faisanz la parole de lui,

1. [wanting in Anglo-Saxon text]
2. to ben herd the vois of his sermounes.
3. To here steven of his saghs ma.
4. ad audiendum vocem sermonum ejus.
5. à oïr la voiz de ses sermons.

XXI.

1. Bletsian drihten eal his bearna mægen,
2. Blessith to the Lord all ȝee his vertues,
3. Blisses to Laverd, alle mightes his,
4. Benedicite Dominum, omnes virtutes ejus,
5. Beneisseiz al Segnor, tutes les vertuz de lui,

1. and his þegna þreat, þe þæt þence nu,
   þæt hi his willan wyrcean georne.
2. ȝee his seruauns that don his wil.
3. His hine þat does þat his wille is.
4. Ministri ejus qui facitis voluntatem ejus.
5. li suen ministre, chi faites la voluntad de lui.

XXII.

1. Eall his agen geweorc ecne drihten
   on his agenum stede eac bletsige,
2. Blessith to the Lord, alle ȝee his werkis.
3. Blisses Laverd, with wille and thoght,
4. Benedicite Dominum,
5. Beneisseiz le Segnur,
3. Alle þe werkes þat he wroght.
4. omnia opera ejus.
5. trestutes les ovres de lui,

1. þær him his egsa anweald standeð.
2. in alle place ȝee his domynaciouns.
3. In alle stedes of his laverdshipe ma,
4. in omni loco dominationis ejus.
5. en chescun liu de la sue dominaciun.

1. Bletsige min sawl bliðe drihten!
2. blesse thou, my soule, to the Lord!
3. Blisse, mi saule, ai Laverd swa!
4. benedic, anima mea, Dominum!
5. beneis, la meie aneme, al Segnor!

The only remark I think it necessary to make on the grammar of this psalm is that the phrase, *man his daies*, in verse xv., where *his*

serves as a possessive sign, is evidently a literal translation from the Latin homo * * dies ejus. The origin of this anomalous form in Layamon may perhaps be traced to a similar source. It should be added that the translators have often followed different texts of their original.

A circumstance which shows the continued poverty of English intellect in the thirteenth century, its want of nationality, and its incapacity for original composition, is that, while it produced numerous translations of French authors, and revived old-world fables of domestic growth, it gave birth to no considerable work connected with the real history of England, except the chronicle of Robert of Gloucester. We can hardly imagine a finer subject in itself, or one which appealed more powerfully to the sympathies and prejudices of the time, and especially to the national pride of Englishmen, if any such were felt, than the crusades of Richard Cœur de Lion; and it would infallibly have inspired poetry, if, in an age when tales of wild adventure were so popular, any poetical genius had existed in the people. I cannot find, however, that, at that period, the exploits of Richard had been made the subject of any original English poem, and the only early work we have on the subject, in an English dress, belongs to the following century, and is avowedly translated from the French.

It appears, however, that Joseph of Exeter, a contemporary and companion of Richard, celebrated his exploits in a Latin poem called Antiocheis, of which only a few verses are extant, and that a pilgrim called Gulielmus Peregrinus wrote in Latin verse on the same subject, but these do not seem to have ever found English translators.

The following extract will serve as a specimen of the diction and poetical character of the principal poem on the exploits of this king, which were made known to English readers in the fourteenth century by a translation from the French of an unknown writer.

LORD Jesus kyng of glorye
Suche grace and vyctorye
Thou sente to Kyng Rychard,
That neuer was found coward!
It is ful god to here in jeste
Off his prowesse and hys conqueste.
Fele romanses men make newe,
Of good knyghtes, strong and trewe,
Off hey dedys men rede romance,
Bothe in Engeland and in France:
Off Rowelond, and of Olyver,
And of every doseper;
Of Alisander, and Charlemain,
Off kyng Arthor, and off Gawayn,
How they wer knyghtes good and curteys;
Off Turpyn, and of Ocier Daneys;
Off Troye men rede in ryme,
What werre ther was in olde tyme;
Off Ector, and of Achylles,
What folk they slowe in that pres.
In Frensshe bookys this rym is wrought,
Lewede menne knowe it nought;
Lewede menne cunne French non;
Among an hondryd unnethis on;
And nevertheles, with glad chere,
Fele off hem that wolde here,
Noble justis, I undyrstonde,
Of doughty knyghtes off Yngelonde.
Par foie, now I woll yow rede,
Off a kyng, doughty in dede;
Kyng Rychard, the werryor best,
That men fynde in ony jeste.
Now alle that hereth this talkyng,
God geve hem alle good endyng!
Lordynges, herkens beforne,
How Kyng Rychard was borne.
Hys fadyr hyghte Kyng Henry.
In hys tyme, sykyrly,
Als I fynde in my sawe,
Seynt Thomas was i-slawe;

At Cantyrbury at the awter-ston,
Wher many myraclys are i-don.
When he was twenty wynter olde,
He was a kyng swythe bolde,
He wolde no wyff, I undyrstonde,
With grete tresore though he her fonde.
Nevyrtheles hys barons hym sedde,
That he graunted a wyff to wedde.
Hastely he sente hys sondes,
Into manye dyverse londes,
The feyreste wyman that wore on liff
Men wolde bringe hym to wyff.
Messangeres were redy dyght;
To schippe they wente that ylke nyght.
Anon the sayl up thay drowgh,
The wynd hem servyd wel inowgh.
Whenne they come on mydde the sea,
(No wynd onethe hadden hee;
Therfore hem was swythe woo.)
Another schip they countryd thoo,
Swylk on ne seygh they never non;
All it was whyt of huel-bon,
And every nayl with gold begrave:
Off pure gold was the stave;
Her mast was yvory;
Off samyte the sayl wytterly.
Her ropes wer off tuely sylk,
Al so whyt as ony mylk.
That noble schyp was al withoute,
With clothys of golde spred aboute,
And her loof and her wyndas,
Off asure forsothe it was.
In that schyp ther wes i-dyght
Knyghts and ladyys of mekyll myght;
And a lady therinne was,
Bryght as the sunne thorugh the glas.
Her men aborde gunne to stande,
And sesyd that other with her honde,
And prayde hem for to dwelle,
And her counsayl for to telle:

And they graunted with all skylle
For to telle al at her wylle:
'Swoo wyde landes we have went,
For Kyng Henry us has sent,
For to seke hym a qwene,
The fayreste that myghte fonde bene.'
Upros a kyng off a chayer,
With that word they spoke ther.
The chayer was charbocle ston,
Swylk on ne sawgh they never non:
And two dukes hym besyde,
Noble men and mekyl off pryde,
And welcomed the messangers ylkone.
Into that schyp they gunne gone.
Thrytty knyghtes, withouten lye,
Forsothe was in that companye.
Into that riche schyp they went,
As messangers that weren i-sent;
Knyghtes and ladyes com hem ayene;
Sevene score, and moo I wene,
Welcomyd hem alle at on worde.
They sette tresteles, and layde a borde;
Cloth of sylk theron was sprad,
And the kyng hymselve bad,
That his doughter wer forth fette,
And in a chayer before him sette.
Trumpes begonne for to blowe;
Sche was sette forth in a throwe,
With twenty knyghtes her aboute,
And moo off ladyes that wer stoute;
All they gunne knele her twoo,
And aske her what she wolde have doo.
They eeten and drank and made hem glade,
And the kyng hymself hem bade.
Whenne they hadde nygh i-eete,
Adventures to speke they nought forgeete.
The kyng ham tolde, in hys resoun,
It com hym thorugh a vysyoun,
In his land that he cam froo,
Into Yngelond for to goo;

And his doughtyr that was so dere,
For to wende bothe in fere.
'In this manere we have us dyght,
Into that lond to wende ryght.'
Thenne aunsweryd a messanger,
Hys name was callyd Bernager,
'Forther wole we seke nought,
To my lord she schal be brought:
When he her with eyen schal sen,
Fol wel payed woll he ben.'
The wynd was out off the northeste,
And servede hem atte the beste.
At the Tour they gunne arryve.
To London the knyghtes wente belyve.
The messangers the kyng have told
Of that lady fayr and bold,
Ther he lay, in the Tour,
Off that lady whyt so flour.
Kyng Henry gan hym son dyght,
With erls, barons, and many a knyght,
Agayn the lady for to wende:
For he was curteys and hende.
The damysele on lond was led,
And clothis off gold before her spred,
And her fadyr her beforn,
With a coron off gold i-corn;
The messangers by ylk a syde,
And menstralles with mekyl pryde.

Weber's *Metrical Romances*, vol. ii.

The early English rhymers and annalists observe a similar mysterious silence with regard to King Alfred, the memory of whom, as a Saxon King, one would suppose, could hardly ever have perished among the direct descendants of his subjects, fellow-soldiers, and citizens. But the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, which devotes about ten octavo pages to a dry detail of some of the principal military and political events of his reign, does not notice a single trait of his moral or intellectual character, a single interesting incident of his private life, or a single fact from which it is possible to form even the most general

estimate of his merits as a ruler, or his personality as a man. Early English vernacular literature is equally barren of information respecting this remarkable prince, and popular tradition retained no remembrance of him, except as his name was connected with several collections of proverbs which were ascribed to him.

The poems — for such we must call them if all rhymed compositions are poetry—of Robert of Gloucester, who flourished about the year 1300, are of considerable philological importance, and of some value as contributions to our knowledge of the history of England, though their literary merit is of a humble order.

The principal work of this author is a chronicle of England, and there is a collection of lives of the English saints, which is now ascribed, upon satisfactory evidence, to the same writer. The subject of this latter production would naturally tend, in that age, to give to it a wider circulation than could be acquired by a voluminous chronicle in great part relating to remote secular events; and accordingly we find that the manuscripts of the lives are much more numerous than those of the history.

The chronicle deserves notice, not only for its contributions of otherwise unknown facts, but because it is the most ancient professed history in the English language. It extends from the siege of Troy to the death of Henry III. in 1272. The earlier part is founded on Geoffrey of Monmouth, the latter generally on more trustworthy sources, and it conveys some information of value upon both the physical and the social condition of England in the thirteenth century. The following lines are favourable specimens of the author's manner: —

Engelond ys a wel god lond, ich wene of eche lond best,
Y set in þe ende of þe world, as al in þe West.
þe see goþ hym al a boute, he stont as an yle.
Here fon[1] heo[2] durre[3] þe lasse doute, but hit be þorw gýle
Of fol[4] of þe selue lond, as me[5] haþ y seye wyle.

[1] *fon*, pl. foes. [2] *heo*, pers. pron. referring to England. [3] *durre*, needs, Ger. darf. *fol*, probably error for *folc*. [5] *me*, men.

From Souþ to Norþ he ys long eiȝte hondred mẏle:
And foure hondred mẏle brod from Est to West to wende,
A mẏdde þo lond as yt be, and noȝt as by þe on ende.
Plente me may in Engelond of alle gode y se,
Bute folc yt for gulte oþer ȝeres þe worse be.
For Engelond ys ful ẏnow of fruyt and of tren,
Of wodes and of parkes, þat ioye yt ys to sen.
Of foules and of bestes of wylde and tame al so.
Of salt fysch and eche fresch, and fayre ryueres þer to.
Of welles swete and colde ynow, of lesen[1] and of mede.
Of seluer or and of gold, of tyn and of lede.
Of stel, of yrn and of bras, of god corn gret won.
Of whyte and of wolle god, betere ne may be non.
Wateres he haþ eke gode y now, ac[2] at be fore alle oþer þre
Out of the lond in to þe see, armes as þei be.
Ware by þe schippes mowe come fro þe se and wende,
And brynge on lond god y now, a boute in eche ende.

In þe contre of Canterbury mest plente of fysch ys.
And mest chase a boute Salesburi of wẏlde bestes y wys.
At London schippes mest, & wyn at Wyncestre.
At Herford schep & orf[3], & fruyt at Wircestre.
Sope a boute Couyntre, yrn at Gloucestre.
Metel, as led & tyn, in þe contre of Excestre.
Euerwik of fairest wode, Lyncolne of fayrest men,
Grantebrugge and Hontyndone mest plente of dup fen.
Elẏ of fairest place, of fairest siȝte Roucestre.
Euene aȝeyn Fraunce stonde þe contre of Chichestre,
Norwiche aȝeyn Denemarc, Chestre aȝeyn Yrlond,
Duram aȝeyn Norwei, as ich vnderstonde.
þre wondres þer beþ in Engolond, none more y not.
þat water of Baþe ys þat on, þat euer ys yliche hot.
And fersch & euere springe, ne be chele[4] no so gret.
Suche baþes þer beþ fele in þe clos & in the stret.
Upon þe pleyn of Salesbury þat oþer wonder ys,
þat Stonhyngel ys y clepud, no more wonder nys.
þe stones stondeþ þer so grete, no more ne mowe be,
Euene vp ryȝt & swyþe hye, þat wonder it is to se:

[1] *lesen*, pastures. [2] *ac*, but. The punctuation is regulated rather by the metre than by the syntax. [3] *orf*, cattle, here, and generally, black cattle, wrongly explained by Coleridge as *sheep*. [4] *chele*, cold, modern *chill*.

And oþer liggeþ hye aboue, þat a mon may be of a ferd,
þat vche mon wondre maý how heo were first a rered.
For noþer gyn, ny monne's strengþe, yt þynkeþ, ne myȝte yt do.
Telle me schal here afturward of þis wondres boþe two,
And how heo were first y mad. þe þridde wonder ys
Up þe hul of þe pek. Norþ wynd þere y wys
Out of þe erþe ofte comeþ, of holes as yt were,
And bloweþ vp of þilke holes, so þat yt wolde a rere
And bere vp grete cloþes, ȝef heo were þer ney,
And blowe hem here and þere vpon þe lofte on heý.
Fayre weyes monyon þer beþ in Engolonde,
Ac foure mest of alle þer beþ ich vnderstonde,
þet þe old kynges mad, were þoru me may wende
From þe on ende of Engelond uorþ to þe oþer ende.
From þe Souþ tilleþ[1] in to þe Norþ Eningestret;
And from þe Est in to þe West Ikenildestrete.
From Douere in to Chestre tilleþ Watlingestrete,
From Souþ Est in to Norþ West, and þat ys som del grete.
þe ferþe is mest of alle, þat tilleþ from Tottenais,
From þe on ende Cornewayle anon to Catenays,
Fro þe Norþ Est in to Souþ West in to Engelonde's ende:
Fosse me clepuþ þike wey, þat by mony god toun doþ wende,
So clene lond ys Engolond, and so pur with outen ore,[2]
þat þe fairest men of þe world þer inne beþ y bore.
So clene, and fair, & purwyt[3], among oþer men heo beþ,
þat me knoweþ hem in eche lond by syȝte, where me hem seþ.
So clene al so is þat lond, and monne's blod so pur,
þat þe gret vnel[4] comeþ not þer, þat me clepuþ þo holy fur,
þat for freteþ monnes lymes, ryȝt as heo were brende.
Ac men of France in þilke vnel me syþ sone a mende,
ȝef heo ben brouȝt in to Engolond: war þorw me may wyte,
þat Engelond ys lond best, as yt is y write.

The Lives and Legends of the Saints, by the same author, do not differ grammatically from the Chronicle, but they are more popular in tone, and in general more interesting, because they are, no doubt, very faithful reflections of the opinions and senti-

[1] *tilleþ*, leads. [2] *ore*, here dross, as of metal, elsewhere, mercy. [3] *purwyt*, pure-white, fair-complexioned. [4] *vnel*, sickness, plague.

ments, as well as of the habits and manners of the English people, at a period concerning which our sources of information are scanty.

The Life of St. Brandan, published by the Percy Society, is of the same fabulous character as a large proportion of the monkish legends of the Middle Ages, but the martyrdom of Becket, also published by the same Society, has very much higher pretensions to literary merit than most parts of the Chronicle can boast, and is by no means wanting in dramatic life and spirit. The most curious part of the Lives of the Saints is a cosmographical, astronomical, and physiological fragment printed in Wright's Popular Treaties on Science. Of course, scientific accuracy is not to be looked for in a work of that period, but the treatise in question, in its views of the laws of nature, and of great cosmical facts—such as the relative magnitudes and distances of the sun and moon, the phases of the latter, which are illustrated by comparing her to a ball shone upon by a candle, and the moon's influence on the tides—is much less absurd than most popular works of the age, and therefore, with all its errors, it may be looked upon as containing truth enough to make it an instructive essay. The sun is stated to be one hundred and sixty-five times, the earth nine times, as large as the moon, and as to the distance of the heaven or firmament from the earth, we are told that,—

Moche is bituene hevene and urthe, for the man that miȝte go
Eche dai evene fourti myle upriȝt and eke mo,
He ne scholde to the hexte hevene, that al day ȝe i-seoth,
Come in eiȝte thousend ȝer, ther as the sterren beoth;
And theȝ Adam oure furste fader hadde bi-gonne anon,
Tho he was furst y-maked, toward hevene gon,
And hadde ech dai fourti myle evene upriȝt i-go.
He nadde noȝt gut to hevene i-come bi a thousend ȝer and mo.

The proportion of Romance words in the general diction of Robert of Gloucester does not exceed four or five per cent., but the number of vocables of this class, which make their first

appearance in his works, is considerable, and his additions to the current vocabulary of English are important, though otherwise he cannot be said to have done much for the elevation of the native literature.

The rhymed history usually known as the Chronicle of Robert Manning, or Robert of Brunne, is the most voluminous work in the English of the early part of the fourteenth century, and it is the last conspicuous production belonging to what most philologists consider as the first period of the English language, which, as before remarked, extends from about 1250 to about 1350. The first part of this chronicle is a translation from the Brut of Wace. It comes down to the death of Cadwalader, and has never been printed. The second, a translation from the Anglo-Norman of Peter de Langtoft, but with many enlargements and corrections, brings down the history of England to the death of Edward I. This was published by Hearne in 1725, under the name of Langtoft's Chronicle, and was reprinted in 1810. The style of de Brunne is superior to that of Robert of Gloucester in ease, though we can hardly say, grace of expression. His literary merits are slender, and his diction, which is formed upon that of Robert of Gloucester, though belonging to a rather more advanced period of philological development, is distinguished from that of his master by some important characteristics. The vocabulary is considerably enlarged by new Romance words, but the principal difference between Robert of Gloucester and Robert of Brunne is, that while the former makes the third person singular indicative present of the verb in *th*, and generally, though indeed not uniformly, uses the Saxon form of the personal pronoun, the latter regularly employs the verbal ending *s*, and has *scho* for the nominative singular feminine, and þei in the nominative, þer in the genitive or possessive plural of the personal pronoun.

The prologue to the unpublished part of the work, which is de Brunne's own, is remarkable for its bearing on certain

questions of old English versification. I introduce it as a favourable specimen of his style, and it is proper to remark that the translator, in both divisions of his work, followed the versification of his original; the metre in the first part being octosyllabic, while the lines in the latter vary from eight syllables to the Alexandrine, or *exametron* of six feet, which was the heroic measure of that age. It will be found in Hearne's edition, Appendix to Preface, p. xcvi.

Lordýnges, that be now here,
If ȝe wille listene & lere
All þe story of Inglande,
Als Robert Mannýng wrýten it fand,
& on Inglýsch has it schewed,
Not for þe lerid bot for þe lewed,
For þo þat in þis land wonn,
þat þe Latýn no Frankýs conn,
For to haf solace & gameñ
In felawschip wheñ þai sitt samen.
And it is wisdom forto wýtten
þe state of þe land, and haf it wrýten:
What manere of folk first it wan,
& of what kynde it first began.
And gude it is for maný thýnges,
For to here þe dedis of kýnges,
Whilk were foles & whilk were wýse.
& whilk of þam couth mast quantýse;
And whilk did wrong & whilk rýght,
& whilk maýntend pes & fýght.
Of þare dedes salle be mý sawe,
In what týme & of what lawe,
I salle ȝow schewe fro gre to gre,
Sen þe týme of sir Noe,
Fro Noe vnto Eneas,
& what betwix þam was,
And fro Eneas tille Brutus týme,
þat kýnde he telles in þis rýme.
Fro Brutus tille Cadwaladres,
þe last Brýton þat þis lande lees.

Alle þat kýnde & alle the frute,
þat come of Brutus þat is þe Brute;
And þe rýght Brute is told nomore,
þan the Brýtons týme wore.
After þe Bretons þe Inglis camen,
þe lordschip of þis lande þai namen;
South & North, West & Est,
þat calle meñ now þe Inglis gest.
When þai first amang þe Bretons,
þat now ere Inglis þan were Saxons,
Saxons Inglis hight alle oliche.
þat arýued vp at Sandwýche,
In þe kýnge's týme Vortogerne,
þat þe lande walde þam not werne.
þat were maýsters of alle þe toþire,
Hengist he hight & Hors his broþire.
þes were hede, als we fýnde,
Where of is comen oure Inglis kýnde.
A hundrethe & fifty ȝere þai com,
Or þat receýued Cristendom.
So lang woned þai þis lande in,
Or þa herde out of Saýnt Austýn,
Amang þe Bretons with mykelle wo,
In sclaundire, in threte & in thro.
þes Inglis dedes ȝe maý here,
As Pers telles alle þe manere.
One maýster Wace þe Frankes telles,
þe Brute alle þat þe Latýn spelles,
Fro Eneas tille Cadwaladre,
þis maýster Wace þer leues he.
And rýght as maýster Wace saýs,
I telle mýn Inglis þe same waýs.
For maýster Wace þe Latýn alle rýmes,
þat Pers ouerhippis maný týmes.
Maýster Wace þe Brute alle redes,
& Pers tellis alle þe Inglis dedes.
þer maýster Wace of þe Brute left,
Ryght begýnnes Pers eft,
And tellis forth þe Inglis storý,
and as he says, þan saý I.

Als þai haf wryteñ & saẏd,
Haf I alle in myn Inglis laẏd,
In sẏmple speche as I couthe,
þat is lightest in manne's mouthe.
I mad noght for no disours,
Ne for no seggers no harpours,
Bot for þe luf of sẏmple meñ,
þat strange Inglis cañ not keñ.
For manẏ it ere þat strange Inglis
In rẏme wate neuer what it is,
And bot þai wist what it mente,
Ellis me thoght it were alle schente.
I made it not forto be praẏsed,
Bot at þe lewed meñ were aẏsed.
If it were made in rẏme couwee,
Or in strangere or enterlace,
þat rede Inglis it ere inowe,
þat couthe not haf coppled a kowe,
þat outhere in couwee or in baston
Som suld haf ben fordon,
So þat fele men þat it herde,
Suld not witte howe þat it ferde.
I see in song in sedgeẏng tale
Of Erceldoun & of Kendale,
Non þam saẏs as þai þam wroght,
& in þer saẏng it semes noght.
þat maẏ þou here in Sir Tristrem,
Ouer gestes it has þe steem,
Ouer all þat is or was,
If meñ it saẏd as made Thomas,
Bot I here it no mañ so say,
þat of som copple som is awaẏ.
So þare faẏre saẏing here beforne,
Is þare trauaẏle nere forlorne.
þai saẏd it for pride & nobleẏe,
þat non were suẏlk as þei,
And alle þat þai wild ouerwhere,
Alle þat ilk wille now forfare,
þai saẏd in so quainte Inglis,
þat manẏone wate not what it is,

þerfore heuẏed wele þe more
In strange rẏme to trauaẏle sore,
And my witte was oure thẏnne,
So strange speche to trauaẏle in,
And forsoth I couth noght
So strange Inglis as þai wroght,
And meñ besoght me manẏ a tẏme,
To turne it bot in light rẏme.
þai saẏd, if I in strange it turne,
To here it manẏon suld skurne.
For it ere names fulle selcouthe,
þat ere not vsed now in mouthe.
And þerfore for þe comonalte,
þat blythelẏ wild listen to me,
On light lange I it begañ,
For luf of þe lewed mañ,
To telle þam þe chaunces bolde,
þat here before was don & tolde.
For þis makẏng I wille no mede,
Bot gude praẏere, when ȝe it rede.
þerfore, ȝe lordes lewed,
For wham I haf þis Inglis schewed,
Prayes to God he gẏf me grace,
I trauaẏled for ȝour solace.
Of Brunne I am, if anẏ me blame,
Robert Mannẏng is mẏ name.
Blissed be he of God of heuene,
þat me Robert with gude wille neuene.
In þe thrid Edwarde's tyme was I,
Wheñ I wrote alle þis storẏ.
In þe hous of Sixille I was a throwe,
Danz Robert of Maltone þat ȝe know
Did it wrẏte for felawes sake,
Wheñ þai wild solace make.

The thirteenth century produced some interesting and curious didactic poems. Those which are translated or imitated from French or Latin models have, as might be expected, greater smoothness of versification, but less originality of thought than those which seem to be of native invention. One of the best

specimens of the former class is the dialogue between the body and the soul, printed in the Appendix to the Camden Society's edition of the Latin poems ascribed to Walter Mapes.

This poem is believed by the editor to be of the thirteenth century, and there are manuscripts of the English version, as well as of corresponding French and Latin texts, which cannot be of a much later date. I cannot, however, resist the conviction that the manuscript from which this text is printed is more recent, for its dialect is grammatically more modern than that of almost any English writer before the time of Chaucer. The English poem is a translation, but there is reason to think that the Latin original is a native English composition. It has merit both of thought and of expression, and the interesting glimpses it gives of the life and manners of its time invest it with some historical value; for though it extends to but two hundred and fifty lines, it contains no inconsiderable amount of real information on these subjects.*

The commencement of the poem is as follows:—

Als I lay in a winteris nyt, in a droukening[1] bifor the day,
Vor sothe I sauȝ a selly[2] syt, a body on a bere lay,
That havde ben a mody[3] knyȝt, and lutel served God to payȝ;
Loren he haved the lives lyȝt; the gost was oute, and scholde away.
Wan the gost it scholde go, yt bi-wente[4] and with-stod,
Bi-helod the body there it cam fro, so serfulli with dredli mod;
It seide, 'weile and walawo! wo worthe thi fleys, thi foule blod!
Wreche bodi, wȝy listouȝ so, that ȝwilene were so wilde and wod?

* There are many points of resemblance between this poem and an Anglo-Saxon dialogue on the same subject, published from a MS. of the twelfth century, by Sir T. Phillips. The mutilated condition of the latter renders the comparison difficult, but the list of luxuries in the old English work seems to be much more copious than that in the Anglo-Saxon, and of course to indicate an advance in the comforts and refinements of life. Although the copy published by Sir T. Phillips is of the twelfth century, the dialect belongs to an earlier date, and the poem was, in all probability, written before the Norman Conquest had introduced the elegancies, which soon followed the transfer of the English crown to the head of a French prince.

[1] *droukening*, slumber. [2] *selly*, strange. [3] *mody*, proud, brave. [4] *bi-wente*, turned back.

Thow that were woned to ride heyre on horse in and out,
So koweynte knit[1], i-kud[2] so wide, as a lyun fers and proud,
ȝwere is al thi michele pride, and thi lede[3] that was so loud?
ȝwi listou there so bare side, i-pricked[4] in that pore schroud?
ȝwere beon thi castles and thi toures? thi chaumbres and thi riche halles?
I-peynted with so riche floures? and thi riche robes alle?
Thine cowltes[5] and thi covertoures? thi cendels and thi riche palles?
Wrechede, it is now thi bour, to moruwe thouȝ schalt ther inne falle.
ȝwere ben thi murdli[6] wedes? thi somers[7], with thi riche beddes?
Thi proude palefreys and thi stedes, that thouȝ haddest in dester leddes?[8]
Thi faucouns that were nouȝt to grede? and thine houndes that thou ledde?
Me thinketh God is the to guede[9], that alle thine frend beon fro the fledde.
ȝwere ben thine cokes snelle, that scholden gon greithe thi mete,
With spetes[10], swete for to smelle? that thouȝ nevere werere fol of frete,[11]
To do that foule fleys to suwelle[12], that foule wormes scholden ete?
And thouȝ havest the pine of helle with glotonye me bi-gete,
For God schop the aftir his schap, and gaf the bothe wyt and skil;
In thi loking[13] was i-laft, to wisse aftir thin oune wil.'
'Ne toc I nevere wyche-craft, ne wyst I ȝwat was guod nor il,
Bote as a wretche dumb and mad, bote as touȝ tauȝtest ther til.
Set to serven the to queme[14], bothe at even and a moruen,
Sithin I was the bi-tauȝt[15] to ȝeme[16], fro the time that thouȝ was born;
Thouȝ that dedes couthest deme, scholdest habbe be war bi-forn
Of mi folye, as it semet; now with thi selve thouȝ art for-lorn.

The minor poems of the first age of English literature may be divided into ballads, political songs and devotional verse. Many of these, including some of the most curious and important, are in Latin. These of course have not much philo-

[1] *koweynte knit*, quaintly, cunningly framed. [2] *i-kud*, known. [3] *lede*, voice. [4] *i-pricked*, wrapped or decked. [5] *cowltes*, quilts. [6] *murdli*, mirthful, gay. [7] *somers*, bedsteads. [8] *in dester leddes*, led on the right hand; the plural form of the participle is curious. [9] *guede*, should be *gnede*, niggardly, severe. [10] *spetes*, this would regularly be *spits*, but I suspect it is here *spices*. [11] *frete*, eating. [12] *suwelle*, meat, relish to bread. [13] *loking*, care, custody, power. [14] *to queme*, to please. [15] *bi-tauȝt*, committed. [16] *to ȝeme*, to keep.

logical relation to our present subject, and I cannot notice them further than to state their existence, and to invite attention to them as well worthy of perusal.

The variety of metres in these productions is great, and though we do not find all the modern forms of the stanza in early English verse, yet there are few poetic measures examples of which may not be produced from that period. The narrative poems in general have little to mark them as English, except the language in which they are written. Poems of this character would circulate mainly among the comparatively uneducated classes, and the copyists, by whom they were transcribed, would generally be persons of less accurate scholastic training and habits than those engaged in the multiplication of works designed for readers of higher culture. Hence the manuscripts containing them would be more negligently executed, and, consequently, are less to be relied on, as evidences of the grammatical character of the language, than works of higher aims and greater literary merit.

These poems are generally anonymous, a circumstance which has been thought to show that they were translations; but of this we have often better proof in internal evidence, or in the existence of the French originals, in manuscripts of more ancient date. In fact, it was only when the national spirit was awakened to distinct consciousness, by the internal struggle called the Barons' wars, that sufficient literary ambition was roused to prompt to original composition; and it has been justly remarked that the general want of literary taste is shown by the fact that the best, most natural, and most graceful productions of French poets were neglected, while far inferior works were translated in considerable numbers.

The political songs and satires of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries are an interesting feature of early English literature, not as possessing merit of conception or of execution, but because they are the first symptoms of a new life, the first evidences of nascent nationality in modern England. They have some resemblance to the popular political poetry of recent

times, at least they have its grossness, but they are wanting in the humour which characterises later English verse of the same class. Most of the extant political poems of the period we are discussing are in Anglo-Norman, or in Latin, for the reason, among others, that in the thirteenth century, at least, written English was not much employed for any purpose; and as there was at that epoch no people, in the modern social sense of that word, there existed no native public interested in political affairs, which could be addressed in the native tongue.

At this time, the French ranked first among the literary languages of Europe, for it had reached a much more advanced stage of grammatical and rhetorical culture than any other, and was, therefore, better suited, not only for poetical composition, but for every branch of higher intellectual effort. Its superiority for literary purposes was felt and admitted, even in states where the influence of France in political matters was far from great; and French acquired, in the thirteenth century, that widely diffused currency, as a generally known and therefore convenient common medium of communication, which it has ever since maintained throughout Continental Europe. Martino de Canale, a Venetian annalist of the thirteenth century, composed his chronicle in French, because, to use his own words: 'the French tongue is current throughout the world, and is more delectable to read and to hear than any other.'* Brunetto Latini, the teacher of Dante, wrote his most important work in the same language, and he thus apologizes for using it instead of Italian: 'If any shall ask why this book is written in Romance, according to the patois of France, I being born Italian, I will say it is for divers reasons. The one is that I am now in France, the other is, that French is the most delightsome of tongues, and partaketh most of the common nature of all other languages.'†

The employment of French by native English authors is by

* Ystoire de li Normanz. Introduction, xciv.

† Et se aucuns demandoit por coi cest liures est escrit en romãs selonc le pacoys

no means to be ascribed wholly to the predominance of Norman influence in England, but, in a considerable degree, to the fact that, for the time, it occupied much the same position which had hitherto been awarded to the Latin, as the common dialect of learned Christendom. This fact has been too generally overlooked by literary historians, and consequently too much weight has been ascribed to political and social causes, in accounting for the frequent use of French by English writers, when, in truth, its employment was very much owing to purely literary considerations.

Many of the poems on English political affairs were the work of native Norman, not English writers, though English subjects, and some were written even in Provençal.

As has been already observed, a great variety of metres are employed in these poems; but most of the English, though rhymed, and resembling Romance poetry in structure, retain the ancient national characteristic of alliteration, and thus combine the two systems, as they do the vocabularies, of both languages. Others again are partly in English, partly in French, thus showing that those for whom they were written were equally familiar with both languages. Thus a poem of the year 1311, upon the violation of the provisions of Magna Charta, so often confirmed and so often broken by English kings, commences with a stanza in the two languages.

L'en puet fere et defere,
Ceo fait-il trop sovent;
It nis nouther wel ne faire;
Therfore Engelond is shent.

de france, puis que nos comēsames ytalliens ie diroie que ce est por diuerses raisons. l'une q̄ nos somes en france et l'autre por ce q̄ la parleure est plus delitable et plus comune a tous lengages.

Manuscript of the Library of the University of Turin, Cod. L. II. 18.

The form pacoys, generally written patois, is remarkable, but I know not how far it is justified by other ancient authorities. Diez supposes patois to be an imitative word, and cites the Hennegau provincial pati-pata, geschnatter, *chattering*, as analogous.

Although we cannot be certain as to the precise definition which Brunetto Latini would have given to pacoys, he apparently uses it in the sense of *dialect*, and regards the Romance as a general speech, of which French was a local form.

Nostre prince de Engletere,
    Par le consail de sa gent,
At Westminster after the feire
    Made a gret parlement.
La chartre fet de cyre,
    Jeo l'enteink et bien le crey,
It was holde to neih the fire,
    And is molten al awey.
Ore ne say mès que dire,
    Tout i va à Tripolay,
Hundred, chapitle, court, and shire,
    Al hit goth a devel way.
Des plusages de la tere
    Ore escotez un sarmoun,
Of iiij. wise-men that ther were,
    Whi Engelond is brouht adoun.

The ferste seide, 'I understonde
Ne may no king wel ben in londe,
    Under God Almihte,
But he cunne himself rede,
Hou he shal in londe lede
    Everi man wid rihte.
        For might is riht,
        Liht is night,
        And fiht is fliht.
For miht is riht, the lond is laweles;
For niht is liht, the lond is loreles;
For fiht is fliht, the lond is nameles.'

That other seide a word ful god,
'Whoso roweth azein the flod,
    Off sorwe he shal drinke;
Also hit fareth bi the unsele,
A man shal have litel hele
    Ther agein to swinke.
        Nu on is two,
        Another is wo,
        And frend is fo.
For on is two, that lond is streintheles;
For wel is wo, the lond is reutheles;
For frend is fo, the lond is loveles.'

That thridde seide, 'It is no wonder
Off thise eyres that goth under,
    Whan theih comen to londe
Proude and stoute, and ginneth ȝelpe,
Ac of thing that sholde helpe
    Have theih noht on honde.
        Nu lust haveth leve,
        Thef is reve,
        And pride hath sleve.
For lust hath leve, the lond is theweles;
For thef is reve, the lond is penyles;
For pride hath sleve, the lond is almusles.'

The ferthe seide, that he is wod
That dwelleth to muchel in the flod,
    For gold or for auhte;
For gold or silver, or any wele,
Hunger or thurst, hete or chele,
    Al shal gon to nohte.
        Nu wille is red,
        Wit is qued,
        And god is ded.
For wille is red, the lond is wrecful;
For wit is qued, the lond is wrongful;
For god is ded, the lond is sinful.

Wid wordes as we han pleid,
Sum wisdom we han seid
    Off olde men and ȝunge;
Off many a thinge that is in londe,
Whoso coude it understonde,
    So have I told wid tongue.

Riche and pore, bonde and fre,
That love is god, ȝe mai se;
    Love clepeth ech man brother;
For it that he to blame be,
Forȝif hit him *par charité*,
    Al theih he do other.

Love we God, and he us alle,
That was born in an oxe stalle,

And for us don on rode.
His swete herte-blod he let
For us, and us faire het
That we sholde be gode.

Be we nu gode and stedefast,
So that we muwen at the last
Haven hevene blisse.
To God Almihti I preie
Lat us never in sinne deie,
That joye for to misse.

Ac lene us alle so don here,
And leve in love and god manere,
The devel for to shende;
That we moten alle i-fere
Sen him that us bouhte dere,
In joye withoute ende. AMEN.

The authors of some of these songs might even boast with Dante: Locutus sum in linguâ trinâ; for occasionally French, Latin and English are intermixed, as in the following poem, of the early part of the reign of Edward II., also contained in the Political Songs published by the Camden Society.

Quant honme deit parleir, videat quæ verba loquatur;
Sen covent aver, ne stultior inveniatur.
Quando quis loquitur, bote resoun reste therynne,
Derisum patitur, ant lutel so shal he wynne.
En seynt eglise sunt multi sæpe priores;
Summe beoth wyse, multi sunt inferiores.
When mon may mest do, tunc velle suum manifestat,
In donis also, si vult tibi præmia præstat.
Ingrato benefac, post hæc à peyne te verra;
Pur bon vin tibi lac non dat, nec rem tibi rendra.
Sensum custodi, quasi mieu valt sen qe ta mesoun;
Thah thou be mody, robur nichil est sine resoun.
Lex lyth doun over al, fallax fraus fallit ubique;
Ant love nys bote smal, quia gens se gestat inique.
Wo walketh wyde, quoniam movet ira potentes:
Ryht con nout ryde, quia vadit ad insipientes.

Dummodo fraus superest, lex nul nout lonen y londe;
Et quia sic res est, ryth may nout radlyche stonde.
Fals mon freynt covenaunt, quamvis tibi dicat, 'habebis.'
Vix dabit un veu gaunt, lene les mon postea flebis.
Myn ant thyn duo sunt, qui frangunt plebis amorem;
Ce deus pur nus sunt facienda sæpe dolorem.
Tresoun dampnificat, et paucis est data resoun;
Resoun certificat, confundit et omnia tresoun.
Pees may nout wel be, dum stat per nomina bina;
Lord Crist, that thou se, per te sit in hiis medicina!
Infirmus moritur, thah lechcraft ligge bysyde;
Vivus decipitur, nis non that her shal abyde
Tels plusours troverez, qui de te plurima prendrount;
Au dreyn bien verrez, quod nullam rem tibi rendrount.
Esto pacificus, so myh thou welde thy wylle;
Also veridicus, ant stond pro tempore stille.
Pees seit en tere, per te, Deus, alma potestas!
Defendez guere, ne nos invadat egestas.
God Lord Almyhty, da pacem, Christe benigne!
Thou const al dyhty, fac ne pereamus in igne!

This confusion of tongues led very naturally to the corruption of them all, and consequently none of them were written or spoken as correctly as at the period when they were kept distinct. In short, the grammar of both English and Anglo-Norman became more and more irregular, as French and Latin became more familiar to the English people. The Anglo-Norman, as it was observed in the last lecture, departed from the Norman-French inflections, and Anglo-Latin became almost as macaronic as the works of Folengo, or as the Daco-Latin of Wallachia, where the traveller Walsh says, that he was waked before dawn, by the tapster of a humble inn, who was standing over him with brandy-bottle and glass, and offering him a morning draught, with the classic salutation: 'Visne *schnapps*, Domine?'

In fact, a macaronic stage seems very often to mark the decline of an old literature and language, in countries exposed

to powerful foreign influences. We find examples of Latinisms in Byzantine Greek, and of Hellenisms in the decay of classic Latin. Ausonius — not the last lawyer who has exchanged the bar for the chair — introduces Greek vocables into his verses, and, in his twelfth epistle, after saying, in hybrid words, that he has wasted time enough in arguing causes in the Common Pleas and in Bank, and in delivering lectures on rhetoric:

> Jam satis, ὦ φίλε Παῦλε, πόνων ἀπεπειρήθημεν,
> Εν τε forφ causaῖς τε και ingrataῖσι καθέδραις,
> Ῥητορικοῖς luδοισι, &c. &c.

he invites his friend Paulus to visit him and share with him a bottle of veritable Chateau Margaux, which he calls:

> νέκταρ vinοιο bonοιο.

The English political poem oldest in subject, if not in date, contained in the Camden Society's volume, is a satire upon the Emperor, or King of Almaigne. It is as follows:—

SONG AGAINST THE KING OF ALMAIGNE.

[MS. Harl. No. 2253, Fol. 58vo, of the reign of Edward II.]

Sitteth alle stille ant herkneth to me:
The Kyn of Alemaigne, bi mi leauté,
Thritti thousent pound askede he
For te make the pees in the countré,
ant so he dude more.
Richard, thah thou be ever trichard,
trichen shalt thou never more.

Richard of Alemaigne, whil that he wes kyng,
* * * * * *
Haveth he nout of Walingford o ferlyng:—
Let him habbe, ase he brew, bale to dryng,
maugre Wyndesore.
Richard, thah thou be ever, etc.

The Kyng of Alemaigne wende do ful wel,
He saisede the mulne for a castel,

With hare sharpe swerdes he grounde the stel,
He wende that the sayles were mangonel
to helpe Wyndesore.
Richard, etc.

The Kyng of Alemaigne gederede ys host,
Makede him a castel of a mulne post,
Wende with is prude ant is muchele bost,
Brohte from Alemayne mony sori gost
to store Wyndesore.
Richard, etc.

By God, that is aboven ous, he dude muche synne,
That lette passen over see the Erl of Warynne:
He hath robbed Engelond, the mores, ant th[e] fenne,
The gold, ant the selver, ant y-boren henne,
for love of Wyndesore.
Richard, etc.

Sire Simond de Mountfort hath swore bi ys chyn,
Hevede he nou here the Erl of Waryn,
Shulde he never more come to is yn,
Ne with sheld, ne with spere, ne with other gyn,
to help of Wyndesore.
Richard, etc.

Sire Simond de Montfort hath suore bi ys cop,
Hevede he nou here Sire Hue de Bigot,
Al he shulde quite here twelfmoneth scot,
Shulde he never more with his fot pot
to helpe Wyndesore.
Richard, etc.

Be the luef, be the loht, sire Edward,
Thou shalt ride sporeles o thy lyard
Al the ryhte way to Dovere ward;
Shalt thou never more breke fore-ward,
ant that reweth sore:
Edward, thou dudest ase a shreward,
forsoke thyn emes lore.
Richard, etc.

Early English satirists by no means confined themselves to censuring political abuses, and in their complaints of the cor-

ruption of the Church they show a boldness worthy of the martyr age of the Reformation. The Latin poems of this class are particularly severe, and they are often written in a tone of mournful seriousness, which is not likely to have been employed except by ecclesiastics who deeply felt the degradation to which their profession was reduced, by the depravity of the higher classes of the clergy. Some of the English songs on this subject are full of curious information both on the relations between the clergy and the laity, and on the habitual modes of life of the middling and lower classes of the people. The following is the commencement of a long poem, contained in the volume I have so often referred to.

WHII werre and wrake in londe and manslauht is i-come,
Whii hungger and derthe on eorthe the pore hath undernome,
Whii bestes ben thus storve, whii corn hath ben so dere,
ȝe that wolen abide, listneth and ȝe muwen here
the skile.
I nelle liȝen for no man, herkne who so wile.

God greteth wel the clergie, and seith theih don amis,
And doth hem to understonde that litel treuthe ther is;
For at the court of Rome, ther treuthe sholde biginne,
Him is forboden the paleis, dar he noht com therinne
for doute;
And thouh the pope clepe him in, ȝit shal he stonde theroute.

Alle the popes clerkes han taken hem to red,
If treuthe come amonges hem, that he shal be ded.
There dar he noht shewen him for doute to be slain,
Among none of the cardinaus dar he noht be sein,
for feerd,
If Symonie may mete wid him he wole shaken his berd.

Voiz of clerk is sielde i-herd at the court of Rome;
Ne were he nevere swich a clerk, silverles if he come,
Thouh he were the wiseste that evere was i-born,
But if he swete ar he go, al his weye is lorn
i-souht,
Or he shal singe *si dedero*, or al geineth him noht.

For if there be in countre an horeling, a shrewe,
Lat him come to the court hise nedes for to shewe,
And bringe wid him silver and non other wed,
Be he nevere so muchel a wrecche, hise nedes sholen be spede
ful stille,
For Coveytise and Symonie han the world to wille.

AND erchebishop and bishop, that ouhte for to enquere
Off ale men of holi churche of what lif theih were,
Summe beth foles hemself, and leden a sory lif,
Therfore doren hii noht speke for rising of strif
thurw clerkes,
And that everich biwreied other of here wrecchede werkes.

But certes holi churche is muchel i-brouht ther doune,
Siththen Seint Thomas was slain and smiten of his croune.
He was a piler ariht to holden up holi churche,
Thise othere ben to slouwe, and feinteliche kunnen worche,
i-wis;
Therfore in holi churche hit fareth the more amis.

But everi man may wel i-wite, who so take ȝeme,
That no man may wel serve tweie lordes to queme.
Summe beth in ofice wid the king, and gaderen tresor to hepe,
And the fraunchise of holi churche hii laten ligge slepe
ful stille;
Al to manye ther beth swiche, if hit were Godes wille.

The feeling of conscious national life, which had been awakened by the Barons' Wars, seems to have been much less freely manifested in the early part of the fourteenth century, and in fact to have become almost dormant, for a considerable time before the French wars of Edward III. roused it again to a long and vigorous activity. The volumes of political poems of the reign of Edward III., which form a part of the series of Chronicles and Memorials of Great Britain and Ireland, do not contain a single English song older than those of Lawrence Minot, which were written after the year 1350.

The various collections of poetry belonging to the first age of English literature, which the philological zeal of scholars

has lately given to the world, contain many descriptive, amatory, and religious songs of no inconsiderable merit. I select the following from the Specimens of Lyric Poetry composed in England in the reign of Edward I., published by the Percy Society.

WITH longyng y am lad,
On molde y waxe mad,
  a maide marreth me;
Y grede, y grone, un-glad,
For selden y am sad
  that semly forte se;
  levedi, thou rewe me,
To routhe thou havest me rad;
Be bote of that y bad,
  My lyf is long on the.

Levedy, of alle londe
Les me out of bonde,
  broht icham in wo,
Have resting on honde,
Ant sent thou me thi sonde,
  sone, or thou me slo;
  my reste is with the ro:
Thah men to me han onde,
To love nuly noht wonde,
  ne lete for non of tho.

Levedi, with al my miht
My love is on the liht,
  to menske when y may;
Thou rew ant red me ryht,
To dethe thou havest me diht,
  y deȝe longe er my day;
  thou leve upon mi lay.
Treuthe ichave the plyht,
To don that ich have hyht,
  whil mi lif leste may.

Lylie-whyt hue is,
Hire rode so rose on rys,
  that reveth me mi rest.

Wymmon war ant wys,
Of prude hue bereth the pris,
burde on of the best;
this wommon woneth by west,
Brihtest under bys,
Hevene y tolde al his
That o nyht were hire gest.

LENTEN ys come with love to toune,
With blosmen ant with briddes roune,
that al this blisse bryngeth;
Dayes-eȝes in this dales,
Notes suete of nyhtegales,
uch foul song singeth.
The threstelcoc him threteth oo,
A-way is huere wynter wo,
when woderove springeth;
This foules singeth ferly fele,
Ant wlyteth on huere wynter wele,
that al the wode ryngeth.

The rose rayleth hire rode,
The leves on the lythe wode
waxen al with wille;
The mone mandeth hire bleo,
The lilie is lossom to seo,
the fenyl ant the fille;
Wowes this wilde drakes,
Miles murgeth huere makes,
ase strem that striketh stille;
Mody meneth, so doh mo,
Ichot ycham on of tho,
for love that likes ille.

The mone mandeth hire lyht,
So doth the semly sonne bryht,
when briddes singeth breme;
Deowes donketh the dounes,
Deores with huere derne rounes,
domes forte deme;
Wormes woweth under cloude,
Wymmen waxeth wounder proude,

so well hit wol hem seme.
ȝef me shal wonte wille of on,
This wunne weole y wole for-gon,
ant wyht in wode be fleme.

WYNTER wakeneth al my care,
Nou this leves waxeth bare,
Ofte y sike ant mourne sare,
When hit cometh in my thoht
Of this worldes joie, hou hit goth al to noht.

Now hit is, ant now hit nys,
Also hit ner nere y-wys,
That moni mon seith soth his ys,
Al goth bote Godes wille,
Alle we shule deye, thath us like ylle.

Al that gren me graueth grene,
Non hit faleweth al by-dene;
Jhesu, help that hit be sene,
And shild us from helle,
For y not whider y shal, ne hou longe her duelle.

JESU, for thi muchele miht,
thou ȝef us of thi grace,
That we mowe dai ant nyht
thenken o thi face.
In myn herte hit doth me god,
When y thenke on Jesu blod,
that ran doun bi ys syde,
From his herte doun to his fot,
For ous he spradde is herte blod,
his wondes were so wyde.

When y thenke on Jhesu ded,
min herte over-werpes,
Mi soule is won so is the led
for my fole werkes.
Ful wo is that ilke mon,
That Jhesu ded ne thenkes on,

what he soffrede so sore!
For my synnes y wil wete,
Ant alle y wyle hem for-lete
nou ant evermore.

Mon that is in joie ant blis,
ant lith in shame ant synne,
He is more then un-wis
that ther-of nul nout blynne.
Al this world hit geth a-way,
Me thynketh hit neȝyth domesday,
nou man gos to grounde;
Jhesu Crist that tholede ded,
He may oure soules to hevene led,
withinne a lutel stounde.

Thah thou have al thi wille,
thenk on Godes wondes,
For that we ne shulde ſpille,
he tholede harde stoundes;
Al for mon he tholede ded,
ȝyf he wyle leve on is red,
ant leve his folie,
We shule have joie ant blis,
More than we conne seien y-wys
in Jesu compagnie.

Jhesu, that wes milde ant fre,
wes with spere y-stonge;
He was nailed to the tre,
with scourges y-swongen.
Al for mon he tholede shame,
Withouten gult, withouten blame,
bothe day ant other.
Mon, ful muchel he lovede the,
When he wolde make the fre,
ant bicome thi brother.

NOTE ON INFLECTIONAL AND GRAMMATICAL CHANGES.

The origin of changes in inflection can very seldom be traced, because they originate in popular speech, and are not adopted by the written tongue until the mode and occasion of their introduction is forgotten; but in cases where the native has been brought into contact with a foreign language, we can often see how a new tendency might have been created, or an existing one strengthened, towards a revolution in a particular direction. Let us take the case of the old verbal plural in *-en*. The Anglo-Saxon plural indicative present, as we have already seen, ended in *th*, so that instead of we love, or we lov*en*, the Saxons said we lufi*ath*, with the same consonantal ending as in the singular, he luf-*ath*. The past tense of the indicative, as we luf-*odon*, *we loved*, and of both tenses of the subjunctive, as we luf-*ion*, *that we may love*, we luf-*odon*, *that we might love*, always ended in *-on*. But though the present indicative plural of all regular verbs ended in *th*, all the semi-auxiliaries, except willan, *to will*, made the plural in *on*, and the Anglo-Saxons said we will*ath*, *we will*, but, at the same time, we scea*lon*, we mag*on*, we cunn*on*, we mot*on*, for *we shall*, *we may*, *we can*, *we must*.

The Norman-French, like modern French, made the first person plural, in all cases, in ons—the *s* being probably silent as it now is—and said nous aimons, *we love*. This termination, though a nasal, bore a considerable resemblance to the Saxon plural in *on*. There was, then, a common point in which the two languages concurred. The Frenchman could not pronounce the *th*, and as the two nations had agreed to adopt *s*, the nearest approximation a Norman could make to the sound of *th*, as the sign of the third person singular of the verb, it was very natural that they should employ the sign *on*, which was common to both, as the sign of the plural.

The Saxon ending *on* was not accented, and the vowel was probably somewhat obscurely articulated, like the *e*, in the modern termination *en*, in the verb *harden* and others of that ending. These circumstances tend to explain why we find the plural of the indicative present in the Ormulum with the ending in *en* instead of *th*. This soon became the regular form in English, and this was the first step of progress to the modern dialect, in which we have dropped the plural ending altogether, giving it, in all the persons, the same form as the first person singular. Thus we say, I *love*, and we *love*, you *love*, they

love, while early English writers said: I *love*, but we *loven*, you *loven*, they *loven*.

In modern French, and there is every reason to believe in Old Norman-French also, the three persons of the singular and the third person of the plural of the verb, though the latter has an additional syllable in writing, are pronounced alike, the terminal syllable being silent in speech; for the plural aiment is pronounced aime, just like the singular, aime. Of the six persons, singular and plural, the French pronounce four alike, rejecting the plural ending *ent* altogether, and this fact probably contributed to facilitate the dropping of the new English plural ending in *en*, which did not long remain in use.

Another new form of expression first exemplified, so far as I know, in the thirteenth century, is the use of the *plural* pronoun instead of the *singular*, in addressing a single person. I do not observe this use of the pronoun in contemporaneous French, nor in any of the Northern Gothic languages, but it was already common in Dutch, and it is possible that the English borrowed it from that source. Not many English words or forms are derived from the Dutch, but Chaucer quotes a Flemish proverb, and one of the words occurring in it, *quad* or *qued*, bad, evil, is found in the Owl and Nightingale, the Surtees Psalter, as well as in other early English writers. *Bidine*, too, common in old ballads, occurs in the Surtees Psalter.* These words are not Anglo-Saxon, and as they were probably taken from the Dutch, other words and forms may have been received from the same language.

But though the plural pronoun was thus early applied to single persons, the complete separation of the two, and the confinement of the singular *thou* to the religious dialect, are very much later. They seem to have been employed indiscriminately for several centuries, and in the Morte d'Arthur, printed in 1485, *thou* and *you*, *thy* and *your* are constantly occurring in the same sentence, and addressed to one and the same person.

* Huydecoper, in his Breedere aantekeningen op Melis Stoke, I., 227, examines the etymology of bideen at considerable length. It is a compound of the particle by and the demonstrative pronoun: by dien, the primitive meaning being, *thereby*, *thereupon*, and hence, *immediately*.

LECTURE VI.

COMMENCEMENT OF SECOND PERIOD: FROM 1350 TO THE TIME OF THE AUTHOR OF PIERS PLOUGHMAN.

We are now to enter on a new philological and literary era, an era in which English genius first acquired a self-conscious individuality, and the English language and its literature disentangled themselves from the confusion in which the conflicting authority of Saxon precedent and French example had involved them. In this second period, the speech of England became, no longer an ill-assorted mixture of discordant ingredients, but an organic combination of well assimilated, though heterogeneous elements, animated by a law of life, and endowed with a vigour of constitution which has given it a luxuriant youth and a healthful manhood, and still promises it a length of days as great, an expansion as wide, as have fallen to the lot of any of the tongues of man.

Considering English, then, as primarily and radically a Gothic speech, invested with a new aspect, and inspired with a new life by Romance influences — just as animals are so modified, in habits, instincts, size and specific characteristics, by changes of nutriment, climate, and other outward circumstances, that the unscientific observer hesitates to recognise them as still belonging to the primitive stock — let us inquire for a moment into the nature of the action by which external forces could produce such important revolutions.

There are two principal modes in which foreign conquest and foreign influence affect language. The first and most

obvious is, by the introduction of foreign words, idioms, and grammatical forms, which may be carried far without any very appreciable effect upon the radical character of the language, or upon the spirit of the people who use it. The other is the more slowly and obscurely manifested action of new institutions, laws, and opinions upon the intellectual constitution and habits of thought of the people, and, indirectly, upon the logical structure of the language as the vehicle of the expression of the national mind and character.

We should suppose, à priori, that the first influence of a cultivated language, employed by a conquering people, upon the less advanced speech of a ruder subject race, would be to denationalize its vocabulary by the introduction of a large number of foreign words, and that syntactical changes would be slower in finding their way into the grammar; but the history of the modern languages known in literature seems to show that this is not universally the case.

I have already mentioned the curious inversion of periodic arrangement which the Turkish has produced in the modern Armenian, without much affecting the vocabulary; and I have given reasons for believing that both Mœso-Gothic and Anglo-Saxon were influenced, in certain points of their grammar, by Greek and Latin syntax. The Gothic languages, which seem to have modified the structure of the Romance dialects, have not bestowed upon them any very large proportion of Northern words; and though the syntax of the native speech of England underwent important changes between the Norman Conquest and the close of the period we have just dismissed, yet the number of Romance words which had been naturalized in England was, thus far, by no means considerable. As has been before observed, the whole number of Greek, Latin, and French words found in the printed English authors of the thirteenth century, even including those which Anglo-Saxon had borrowed from the nomenclature of theology and ethics, scarcely exceeds one

thousand, or one eighth part of the total vocabulary of that era; and in the actual diction of any one English writer of the period in question, not above one word in twenty or twenty-five is of Latin or Romance derivation.

But while these influences were so slow and so gradual in their operation on the lexical character of English, moral causes were at work, which, at the critical moment, gave new energy to the assimilative power of the English tongue, and when the craving for a more generous intellectual diet was distinctly felt, and larger facilities were demanded, English suddenly enriched itself by a great accession of Latin and Romance words. It is a remarkable fact, as we shall see more fully hereafter, that at the very moment when it was naturalizing this foreign element with the greatest rapidity, it asserted most energetically its grammatical independence, and manifested a tendency to the revival of Anglo-Saxon syntactical forms which had become well-nigh obsolete.

Hitherto, change had been principally in the way of disorganization, decomposition, but when the inhabitants of England no longer consisted of a corporation of foreign lords and a herd of aboriginal serfs, when a community of interest had grown up between the native and the stranger, and mutual sympathies were born, then a new, heroic and genial nationality sprang into being, revived the sparks that yet slumbered in the ashes of departed Saxondom, and fed them with a fuel borrowed alike from the half-forgotten stores of native growth and from the more abundant products of sunny and luxuriant France.

Romance words and forms had been imposed by foreign authority upon a reluctant and unreceptive speech, the sufficient medium of communication for a people too rude and uncultivated to feel its own debasement, and to know the extent of its own intellectual deficiencies; but when revived, or rather newborn, England awakened to a consciousness of the wants which make themselves so imperiously felt, whenever a new national

life is developed, it proceeded to supply those wants by the summariest methods, from all accessible sources.

Thenceforward, to use the comparison of St. Jerome, it seized and appropriated foreign words as a conqueror,— no longer unwillingly received and bore than as a badge of servitude to an alien yoke.

English, as distinguished from Anglo-Saxon, thus far can hardly be said to have gained other than a negative existence, for it had lost the formal characteristics of the old speech, and had not yet acquired the shape or spirit of the new. The spoken and written dialect was but a corrupted and denaturalized jargon, or rather congeries of jargons, for every district had its local patois which was broadly distinguished from the speech of other shires. The necessities of social and political life, indeed, compelled the occasional employment of these native dialects in written communication, by persons whose scholastic training was Latin or French; but until the close of the thirteenth century, there was no indigenous public which possessed a written vernacular, to any such extent as to be accessible to literary influences. For all the purposes of common national culture, therefore, English may be regarded as still unwritten.

I have before remarked that the popular ballads, which existed in local dialects, did not constitute a literature, and that England had no peculiar literature of her own till after the middle of the fourteenth century. The mass of those who spoke the native tongue, of those who listened to, and even those who composed, the popular ballads, were, in all probability, wholly ignorant of letters, and for them English existed only as a spoken language. The traditions and the legends, the ballads and the war-songs, which float from mouth to mouth, in any unwritten speech, cannot constitute a literature, for they cannot exist in fixed and permanent forms. In the retentive memory of the humblest class of bards and narrators,

they may dwell and be repeated for years with little change of form or substance. But most of the poetical reciters and sagamen are themselves creators, and if memory chance to fail, or if a finer ear or a more imaginative temperament suggest improvements in the ballad or the story they recite, they will not scruple to make verbal or inventive changes. Hence every bard is continually moulding and remoulding his lays into accordance with his habitual tastes and sentiments, or with the changeful temper which the humour of the moment may inspire. The leading facts, the raw material, may remain the same, but the poem or the saga, so long as it is unrecorded, will continually appear and reappear in a new dress, a new phraseology, and often in a new predominant strain of imagery, of thought or of sentiment.

Now, constant peculiarities of verbal combination, of prevalent tone, and especially of the aspect in which the relations between man and man, and man and nature, are viewed, constitute the characteristic and essence of every primitive national literature, and difference the imaginative creations of one nascent people from those of another. They are at once the flesh that clothes, and the organic principle that animates and individualises the intellectual products of all uncultivated races. In partially civilized nations, living under similar climatic and other physical conditions, the subjects will be alike, the leading facts of life nearly identical; but it is the point of view from which facts are regarded, the embellishments of fancy with which they are decorated, that characterize and distinguish the national treatment of them, or, in other words, the national literature, in ruder periods of associate life.

The poems and tales of primitive ages turn mainly on the material interests of men, though the events which act upon those interests may be occasioned by moral affections, passions, or emotions. The moral judgment on facts, and even the exhibition of their moral results, the discussion of their bearing

on the interests of society, belong to later ages, and to an entirely different phase of literature.*

Until the intellectual productions of rude eras are recorded, and preserved in permanent memorials, so as to afford opportunities for study, comparison, imitation, they will be individual in the moral and the imaginative element that enters into them; and while they bear the general likeness which belongs to all the productions of uncultivated races, differenced only by the special character of each writer, they will not be marked by the finer analogies, the subtler contrasts, and the nicer shades of colour, which are the result of artificial culture, and which become, when made in a certain degree uniform and permanent, the characteristics of national genius.

The birth or revival of a truly national and peculiar literature is generally contemporaneous with an enlargement of the vocabulary, by foreign importation, or by the resuscitation of obsolete words of native growth. It is not always easy to say whether this extension of the means of expression is the cause or the consequence of the conception and familiarization of new ideas; but, in any event, new thoughts and new words are necessarily connected, if not twin-born. Hence the awakening of a new spirit of nationality — which was a result of the French and Scotch wars of Edward III. — the enlargement of the English vocabulary, and the impulse to the creation of an original English literature, were nearly simultaneous. English scholars, though trained as all educated Englishmen thus far had been,

* In the Icelandic sagas, it is rare to find any condemnation of the acts of cruel violence in which those narratives abound, and a bloody murder is generally spoken of as a stórvirki, a great act. Thus in Njála, when Flosi was preparing to attack the sons of Njáll with fire and sword, he concealed his purpose from his father-in-law Hallr, because he thought Hallr would letia allra storvirkia, prevent all murder. Mörgum þótti þat stórvirki, mörgum þótti hann harm-dauði, it seemed to many a great act, to many his seemed a death to be regretted, are the strongest expressions of disapprobation commonly used on such occasions.

It is worth noticing that, in the last example, harm-dauði is an adjective agreeing with the subject of the phrase.

in schools where only French and Latin were grammatically taught, had already become weary of reading even the masterpieces of Continental genius in a foreign garb, and the translation of French poems into the native speech of England, their naturalization as English possessions, was the first movement in the manifestation of a new literary life.

The want of a sufficient nomenclature and the convenience of rhyme and metre, as is very clearly seen in all the older English versions, naturally led to the employment of many French words in the translations; and in an age when Latin and French, or at least the latter, were quite as familiar to every educated man as English, a considerable proportion of French words might, in Englishing French poems, be introduced almost unconsciously to the translator, and without exciting much notice on the part of a reader. The circulation of translated works was no longer confined to the higher classes, who hitherto had alone enjoyed any opportunities for literary culture. About the middle of the fourteenth century, schools were established in which English was both taught as itself an object of study, and employed as a vehicle of instruction in other languages and disciplines. Whatever existed in the English tongue, whether by translation or by original composition, now became a part of the general patrimony of the English people, and there, as everywhere else, the learning, the poetry, the philosophy, which had been slowly gathered on the summits of social life, and had been the peculiar nutriment of favoured classes, now flowed down to a lower level, and refreshed, as with the waters of a fountain of youth, the humbler ranks of the English people. Native poets, composing original works in their own tongue, would naturally use the poetic diction in which the productions of French literature had been clothed in assuming an English dress; for these were their only vernacular models. But English rhymers were still generally acquainted with French, and that language, as we have seen, had already attained a culture which eminently fitted it for

literary purposes, and made it, as the Latin has always been, a storehouse of poetic wealth in words as well as in thought, and a convenient resource to versifiers who were in vain struggling to find adequate expression in the vocabulary of Saxon-English. The English middle classes, who were now, for the first time, admitted to the enjoyment of literary pleasures, accepted, as a consecrated speech, the dialect employed by their authors and translators, without inquiry into the etymology of its constituents, and thus, in the course of one generation, a greater number of French words were introduced into English verse, and initiated as lawful members of the poetical guild, than in the nearly three centuries which had elapsed since the Norman Conquest. The foreign matter became thoroughly assimilated nutriment to the speech, the mind and the heart of the fragmentary peoples who had now combined in an entire organized commonwealth, and though the newly adopted Romance words were not indigenous, yet they were acknowledged and felt to be as genuine English, as those whose descent from the Gothic stock was most unequivocal.

Epictetus observes, that the sheep, though it eats grass, produces not hay but wool. So English writers of the fourteenth century, though they derived their chief intellectual food from the fields of Romance literature, conceived, nevertheless, original thoughts, imposed new shades and distinctions of meaning on the words they borrowed, coloured with new hues the images drawn from nature and the reflections prompted by the special forms and conditions of English life, and thus created a new literary substance, which soon became a distinct and independent individuality in the world of letters.

It is a great, but very widely spread error, to suppose that the influx of French words in the fourteenth century was due alone to poetry and other branches of pure literature. The law, which now first became organized into a science, introduced very many terms borrowed from the nomenclature of Latin and French jurisprudence; the glass-worker, the enameller, the archi-

tect, the brass-founder, the Flemish clothier, and the other handicraftsmen, whom Norman taste and luxury invited, or domestic oppression expelled from the Continent, brought with them the vocabularies of their respective arts; and Mediterranean commerce — which was stimulated by the demand for English wool, then the finest in Europe — imported, from the harbours of a sea where French was the predominant language, both new articles of merchandize and the French designations of them.

The sciences too, medicine, physics, geography, alchemy, astrology, all of which became known to England chiefly through French channels, added numerous specific terms to the existing vocabulary, and very many of the words, first employed in English writings as a part of the technical phraseology of these various arts and knowledges, soon passed into the domain of common life, in modified or untechnical senses, and thus became incorporated into the general tongue of society and of books.

The poets, so far from corrupting English by a too large infusion of French words, were in truth reserved in the employment of such, and, when not constrained by the necessities of rhyme, evidently preferred, if not a strictly Anglo-Saxon diction, at least a dialect composed of words which use had already familiarized to the English people.

The truth of this position, which has been overlooked in the great mass of uncritical animadversion on the English language of the fourteenth century, will be at once made apparent by an examination of the dialect of the prose writers of that era, and of those poems which are addressed to the least refined classes, and employ the least ornate and most simple and intelligible diction.

As this is an unfamiliar view of the subject, and as it is a point of interest and importance in the history of English philology, it may be worth while to devote a little time and space to the special consideration of it. Sir John Mandeville is generally considered the earliest prose writer of the second

period of English literature and philology. Mandeville left England in the year 1322, and spent many years in travel, principally in Oriental countries. After his return to his native land, he drew up, in the year 1356, an account of his observations, in Latin, and, to use his own words, 'put this boke out of Latyn into Frensche, and translated it agen out of Frensche into Englyssche, that every man of my Nacioun may understande it.' *

The manuscripts of Mandeville, in the three languages in which his travels appeared, are so numerous that Halliwell says: 'I will undertake to say that, of no book, with the exception of the Scriptures, can more manuscripts be found, of the end of the fourteenth and beginning of the fifteenth centuries,' and there are no less than nineteen copies in the British Museum alone. Six of these are in English, and there are few great public or private libraries in England which do not contain one or more manuscripts of this author, in the vernacular tongue. This fact proves a very wide circulation of the book, and of course that its dialect was readily intelligible to the great mass of English-speaking people. Although the style and grammatical structure of Mandeville are idiomatic, yet the proportion of words of Latin and French origin employed by him, in his straightforward, unpoetical, and unadorned narrative, is

* Careless readers of Mandeville have often understood him as representing that he spent the interval between 1322 and 1356 abroad. But this he does not say. After stating, p. 315 of the reprint of 1839, that he 'departed from oure Contrees and passed the See, the Zeer of Grace 1322,' he adds, 'now I am comen hom (mawgree my self) to reste; for Gowtes, Artetykes, that me distreynen, tho diffynen the ende of my labour, azenst my wille (God knowethe). And thus takynge Solace in my wrecched reste, recordynge the tyme passed, I have fulfilled theise thinges and putte hem wryten in this boke, as it wolde come in to my mynde, the Zeer of Grace 1356 in the 34 Zeer that I departede from oure Contrees.'

If Mandeville had not spent a considerable time in England after his return, and before writing his travels, it is quite impossible that his English should have been so idiomatic. An absence of thirty-four years, at a period when the English language was in so unstable a state, would have left him far behind the actual condition of the speech at his return.

greater than that found in the works of Langlande, Chaucer, Gower, or any other English poet of that century. In the Prologue, which, besides proper names and Latin quotations, contains something less than twelve hundred words, more than one hundred and thirty, or eleven per cent., are of Latin or French origin, and of these, the following thirty are new to English, or at least not found in the printed literature of the preceding century:—assembly, because, comprehend, conquer, certain, environ, excellent, former (noun), frailty, glorious, glory, inflame, inumber (inumbrate), moisten, nation, people, philosopher, plainly, proclaim, promise, pronounce, province, publish, reconcile, redress, subject, temporal, translate, trespasser, visit. The *new* words are relatively more numerous in the Prologue than in the rest of the work, but the Latin and Romance are not in larger proportion than in the narrative generally. I find, however, in chapters i., ii., iii., xxi., xxii., the following words of that character, which are not in Coleridge's Glossarial Index:—abstain, abundant, ambassador, anoint, apparel, appear, appraize, array, attendance, benefice, benignly, bestial, calculation, cause, chaplet, cherish, circumcision, claim, clarté (light), command (verb), comparison, continually, contrarious, contrary, convenient, convert, corner, cover (in the present sense), cruelty, cubit, curiously, date, defend (forbid), degree, deny, deprive, desert (waste), devoutly, diaper, discordant, discover, disfigured, dispend, dissever, diversity, duchy, enemy, enforce, engender, estate, estimation, examine, faithfully, fertre (a litter, Lat. feretrum), fiercely, fornication, foundation, generation, governance, gum, idol, immortal, imprint, incline, inspiration, join, joncs (rushes), letters (alphabetic characters), lineage, marquis, menace, minstrelsy, money, monster, mortal, multitude, necessary, obedient, obeissant, obstacle, officer, opinion, ordinance, ordinately, orient, ostrich, outrageously, paper, pasture, pearl, perch (a pole), perfectly, profitable, promise (noun), proper (own), province, purple, quantity, rebellion, receive, region, relation,

religious, return, reverend, royally, royalty, rudely, sacrament, science, search, scripture, servitor, signification, simony, soldier, solemn, specialty, spiritual, stranger, subjection, superscription, table, temporal, testament, throne (verb), tissue, title (inscription), title (right), unction, usury, value, vary, vaulted, vessel, vicar, victory, vulture; one hundred and forty-four in all. We find, then, in the Prologue and these five chapters, which make about an eighth of the volume, one hundred and seventy-four Latin and Romance words, not met with in the printed literature of the thirteenth century. If we suppose the remainder of the book to contain as many in proportion, we should have, in a single work of one writer, an addition of about fourteen hundred words of the Latin stock to the vocabulary of the previous century. It is indeed probable that the unexamined chapters of Mandeville might yield fewer new words, but as other authors of the first half of the fourteenth century contain many vocables not found in that writer, we are certainly safe in saying that between 1300 and 1350 as many Latin and French words were introduced into the English language as in the whole period of more than two centuries which had elapsed between the Conquest and the beginning of the fourteenth century.

It was, then, the common necessities of the people, the essential deficiencies of the remnant of Anglo-Saxon, which now constituted the vernacular of England — and which, in its debased estate, had lost its character of a flexible, an expressive and a multifarious speech — that occasioned the incorporation of so many Romance words into the English language; and poetry is guiltless of the charge of having corrupted the simplicity and purity of the native tongue.

The English of Mandeville, with few exceptions, belongs to a more advanced stage of progress than that of Robert of Gloucester, and the proportion of Romance words in the English vocabulary seems to have been suddenly increased in our author's time, and in all probability more by the popularity of

his works, than by the influence of any other writer of that century.

Although the dialect of Mandeville exhibits the language, upon the whole, in a more developed phase than the works of any preceding author, there is otherwise nothing in his volume which marks him as an Englishman. It is purely a record of observations, and a detail of information gathered from other sources. It possesses no national tone of colouring, and the Latin and French texts might equally well have been written by a subject of the French or of the English crown. The immense popularity of Mandeville, and the influence his writings probably produced upon the language, justify me in giving fuller extracts from his travels than can be afforded for authors whose philological importance is less, though their literary merits may be greater.

THE PROLOGUE.

For als moche as the Lond bezonde the See, that is to seye, the Holy Lond, that Men callen the Lond of Promyssioun, or of Beheste, passynge alle othere Londes, is the most worthi Lond, most excellent, and Lady and Sovereyn of alle othere Londes, and is blessed and halewed of the precyous Body and Blood of oure Lord Jesu Crist; in the whiche Lond it lykede him to take Flesche and Blood of the Virgyne Marie, to envyrone that holy Lond with his blessede Feet; and there he wolde of his blessednesse enoumbre him in the seyd blessed and gloriouse Virgine Marie, and become Man, and worche many Myracles, and preche and teche the Feythe and the Lawe of Cristene Men unto his Children; and there it lykede him to suffre many Reprevinges and Scornes for us; and he that was Kyng of Hevene, of Eyr, of Erthe, of See and of alle thinges that ben conteyned in hem, wolde alle only ben cleped Kyng of that Lond, whan he seyde, *Rex sum Judeorum*, that is to seyne, *I am Kyng of Jewes;* and that Lond he chees before alle other Londes, as the beste and most worthi Lond, and the most vertuouse Lond of alle the World: For it is the Herte and the myddes of all the World; wytnessynge the Philosophere, that seythe thus; *Virtus rerum in medio consistit:* That is to seye, *The Vertue of thinges is in the myddes;* and in that Lond he wolde lede his Lyf, and suffre Passioun and

Dethe, of Jewes, for us; for to bye and to delyvere us from Peynes of Helle, and from Dethe withouten ende; the whiche was ordeyned for us, for the Synne of oure formere Fader Adam, and for oure owne Synnes also: For as for himself, he hadde non evylle deserved: For he thoughte nevere evylle ne dyd evylle: And he that was Kyng of Glorie and of Joye, myghten best in that Place suffre Dethe; because he ches in that Lond, rathere than in ony othere, there to suffre his Passioun and his Dethe: For he that wil pupplische ony thing to make it openly knowen, he wil make it to ben cryed and pronounced in the myddel place of a Town; so that the thing that is proclamed and pronounced, may evenly strecche to alle Parties: Righte so, he that was formyour of alle the World, wolde suffre for us at Jerusalem; that is the myddes of the World; to that ende and entent, that his Passioun and his Dethe, that was pupplischt there, myghte ben knowen evenly to alle the Parties of the World. See now how dere he boughte Man, that he made after his owne Ymage, and how dere he azen boghte us, for the grete Love that he hadde to us, and we nevere deserved it to him. For more precyous Catelle ne gretter Ransoum, ne myghte he put for us, than his blessede Body, his precyous Blood, and his holy Lyf, that he thralled for us; and alle he offred for us, that nevere did Synne. A dere God, what Love hadde he to us his Subjettes, whan he that nevere trespaced, wolde for Trespassours suffre Dethe! Righte wel oughte us for to love and worschipe, to drede and serven suche a Lord; and to worschipe and preyse suche an holy Lond, that broughte forthe suche Fruyt, thorghe the whiche every Man is saved, but it be his owne defaute. Wel may that Lond be called delytable and a fructuous Lond, that was bebledd and moysted with the precyouse Blode of oure Lord Jesu Crist; the whiche is the same Lond, that oure Lord behighten us in Heritage. And in that Lond he wolde dye, as seised, for to leve it to us his Children. Wherfore every gode Cristene Man, that is of Powere, and hathe whereof, scholde peynen him with all his Strengthe for to conquere oure righte Heritage, and chacen out alle the mysbeleevynge Men. For wee ben clept Cristene Men, aftre Crist our Fadre. And zif wee ben righte Children of Crist, we oughte for to chalenge the Heritage, that oure Fadre lafte us, and do it out of hethene Mennes hondes. But nowe Pryde, Covetyse and Envye han so enflawmed the Hertes of Lordes of the World, that thei are more besy for to disherite here Neyghbores, more than for to chalenge or to conquere here righte Heritage before seyd. And the comoun Peple, that wolde putte here Bodyes and here Catelle, for to conquere oure Heritage, thei may not don it withouten the Lordes. Far a semblee of Peple withouten a

Cheventeyn, or a chief Lord, is as a Flock of Scheep withouten a Schepperde; the which departeth and desparpleth, and wyten never whidre to go. But wolde God, that the temporel Lordes and alle worldly Lordes weren at gode accord, and with the comen Peple woulden taken this holy Viage over the See. Thanne I trowe wel, that within a lityl tyme, oure righte Heritage before seyd scholde be reconsyled and put in the Hondes of the righte Heires of Jesu Crist.

And for als moche as it is longe tyme passed, that ther was no generalle Passage ne Vyage over the See; and many Men desiren for to here speke of the holy Lond, and han thereof gret Solace and Comfort; I John Maundevylle, Knyght, alle be it I be not worthi, that was born in Englond, in the Town of Seynt Albones, passed the See, in the Zeer of our Lord Jesu Crist MCCCXXII, in the Day of Seynt Michelle; and hidre to have ben longe time over the See, and have seyn and gon thorghe manye dyverse Londes, and many Provynces and Kyngdomes and Iles, and have passed thorghe Tartarye, Percye, Ermonye the litylle and the grete; thorghe Lybye, Caldee and a gret partie of Ethiope; thorghe Amazoyne, Inde the lasse and the more, a gret partie; and thorghe out many othere Iles, that ben abouten Inde; where dwellen many dyverse Folkes, and of dyverse Maneres and Lawes, and of dyverse Schappes of Men. Of whiche Londes and Iles, I schalle speke more pleynly hereaftre. And I schalle devise zou sum partie of thinges that there ben, whan time schalle ben, aftre it may best come to my mynde; and specyally for hem, that wylle and are in purpos for to visite the Holy Citee of Jerusalem, and the holy Places that are thereaboute. And I schalle telle the Weye, that thei schulle holden thidre. For I have often tymes passed and ryden the way, with gode Companye of many Lordes: God be thonked.

And zee schulle undirstonde, that I have put this Boke out of Latyn into Frensche, and translated it azen out of Frensche into Englyssche, that every Man of my Nacioun may undirstonde it. But Lordes and Knyghtes and othere noble and worthi Men, that conne Latyn but litylle, and han ben bezonde the See, knowen and undirstonden, zif I erre in devisynge, for forzetynge, or elles; that thei mowe redresse it and amende it. For thinges passed out of longe tyme from a Mannes mynde or from his syght, turnen sone into forzetynge: Because that Mynde of Man ne may not ben comprehended ne witheholden, for the Freeltee of Mankynde.

FROM PP. 137–139.

And therfore I schalle telle zou, what the Soudan tolde me upon a day, in his Chambre. He leet voyden out of his Chambre alle maner

of men, Lordes and othere: for he wolde speke with me in Conseille. And there he askede me, how the Cristene men governed hem in oure Contree. And I seyde him, Righte wel: thonked be God. And he seyde me, Treulyche, nay: for zee Cristene men ne recthen righte noghte how untrewly to serve God. Ze scholde zeven ensample to the lewed peple, for to do wel; and zee zeven hem ensample to don evylle. For the Comownes, upon festyfulle dayes, whan thei scholden gon to Chirche to serve God, than gon thei to Tavernes, and ben there in glotony, alle the day and alle nyghte, and eten and drynken, as Bestes that have no resoun, and wite not whan thei have y now. And also the Cristene men enforcen hem, in alle maneres that thei mowen, for to fighte, and for to desceyven that on that other. And there with alle thei ben so proude, that thei knowen not how to ben clothed; now long, now schort, now streyt, now large, now swerded, now daggered, and in alle manere gyses. Thei scholden ben symple, meke and trewe, and fulle of Almes dede, as Jhesu was, in whom thei trowe: but thei ben alle the contrarie, and evere enclyned to the Evylle, and to don evylle. And thei ben so coveytous, that for a lytylle Sylver, thei sellen here Doughtres, here Sustres and here owne Wyfes, to putten hem to Leccherie. And on with drawethe the Wif of another: and non of hem holdethe Feythe to another: but thei defoulen here Lawe, that Jhesu Crist betook hem to kepe, for here Salvacioun. And thus for here Synnes, han thei lost alle this Lond, that wee holden. For, for hire Synnes here God hathe taken hem in to oure Hondes, noghte only be Strengthe of our self, but for here Synnes. For wee knowen wel in verry sothe, that whan zee serve God, God wil helpe zou: and whan he is with zou, no man may be azenst you. And that knowe we wel, be oure Prophecyes, that Cristene men schulle wynnen azen this Lond out of oure Hondes, whan thei serven God more devoutly. But als longe als thei ben of foule and of unclene Lyvynge, (as thei ben now) wee have no drede of hem, in no kynde: for here God wil not helpen hem in no wise. And than I asked him, how he knew the State of Cristene men. And he answerde me, that he knew alle the state of the Comounes also, be his Messangeres, that he sente to alle Londes, in manere as thei weren Marchauntes of precyous Stones, of Clothes of Gold and of othere thinges; for to knowen the manere of every Contree amonges Cristene men. And than he leet clepe in alle the Lordes, that he made voyden first out of his Chambre; and there he schewed me 4, that weren grete Lordes in the Contree, that tolden me of my Contree, and of many othere Cristene Contrees, als wel as thei had ben of the same Contree: and thei spak Frensche righte wel; and the Sowdan

also, where of I had gret Marvaylle. Allas! that it is gret sclaundre to oure Feythe and to oure Lawe, whan folk that ben with outen Lawe, schulle repreven us and undernemen us of oure Synnes. And thei that scholden ben converted to Crist and to the Lawe of Jhesu, be oure gode Ensamples and be oure acceptable Lif to God, and so converted to the Lawe of Jhesu Crist, ben thorghe oure Wykkednesse and evylle lyvynge, fer fro us and Straungeres fro the holy and verry Beleeve, schulle thus appelen us and holden us for wykkede Lyveres and cursed. And treuly thei sey sothe. For the Sarazines ben gode and feythfulle. For thei kepen entierly the Cōmaundement of the Holy Book Alkaron, that God sente hem be his Messager Machomet; to the whiche, as thei seyne, seynt Gabrielle the Aungel often tyme tolde the wille of God.

Although the diction of Mandeville shows that the English language had made a rapid advance within a few years, and had acquired great compass and flexibility of expression, the hour for a truly national literature had not yet struck. But it was nigh at hand, and the blind struggles of the yet unconscious English intellect, and the material and social wants of the English people, were preparing a fitter medium to embody it, whenever English genius should be ready to incarnate itself in a new and original form. The slow and hard-won concessions, which now the nobles, now the burgesses or civic populations, and now, to some extent, the rustic classes, had extorted from a succession of despotic kings, and the gradual amalgamation of the indigenous and the foreign element, had at length created a *people*, by which term is meant, in modern political language, an independent body of freemen, born, every man, to the enjoyment of life, personal liberty, the ownership of self, and the use, control, and disposal of the fruits of his own labour.* The

* I am aware that serfdom or villenage existed in England to a considerably later period than the fourteenth century; but the villeins apparently did not form a great proportion of the population. The nation was not divided, as in some European states, into nobles, burgesses, and serfs, but there was a very numerous class of rural tillers of the soil, and even of gentry, who were, to all intents and purposes, personally as free as the commonalty of England is at this day. The rural commoners and the burgesses far outnumbered all other ranks, and constituted the real people of England.

union of such a people with the governing dynasty or class, whether hereditary or elective, constitutes a nation; and any aggregation of masters and serfs, any political society without a general community of rights and interests, under whatever form of governmental organization, composes a horde of brutal lords and brutified thralls, not a civilized commonwealth, a people or a nation.

To this condition of political and social progress England had now arrived. It was a new society, with a new language, a new character, new wants, tastes and sentiments, and was, therefore, just in the position to receive and to inspire a new literature, as the expression of a new and vigorous national life.

But although, from this moment, the productions of native genius are marked by peculiarities never before manifested on English soil, and which have since continued to characterize all succeeding English literature, yet the old forms of composition, the conventional laws and restraints under which alone poetry had hitherto existed, were not at once (some of them never have been) discarded. The vocabulary, indeed, had become strongly tinged with an infusion of Romance words, but, though the process of appropriation and assimilation of this foreign material was still going on, there were symptoms of a reaction in favour of obsolete or at least obsolescent Saxon philological and poetical canons. Early English poetry divided itself into two schools, both employing the same vocabulary but in different forms of composition. The one followed Continental models in literature, the other sought to recommend itself to the taste and character of the more numerous part of the population, by reviving the laws of Saxon verse, some remains of which still lingered in the memory of the common people.

The Saxon alliterative and rhythmical verse was especially suited to a language abounding in monosyllables, with few prefixes, and with a principal accent on the first syllable, which was also usually the radical. Rhyme and metre are adapted to tongues with longer words, and with an accentual system

which throws the stress of voice towards the end, rather than the beginning, of the word. The system of versification, belonging to the language which furnished the words expressive of the new ideas and new conditions that formed the distinguishing element of the new nationality, could not but finally prevail; and, after a short struggle, Anglo-Saxon versification yielded to the superior fitness of Romance metres for the present tendencies of English genius, just as the character and institutions of the Anglo-Saxon people had yielded to the more energetic life and higher culture of the Norman.

The poems of Laurence Minot, which date a little after the middle of the fourteenth century, are interesting as an attempt to unite the Saxon characteristic of alliteration, not merely with rhyme, but with poetic measures both of verse and stanza which properly belonged to Romance literature. It was, indeed, not the first experiment of the kind, but in almost all previous essays the versification was so imperfect, that even when they imitate the longer French verses, and, of course, contain more syllables in the measure than was usual with the Anglo-Saxon poets, they are rather rhythmical than metrical.

The works of Minot exist only in a single manuscript, of a date somewhat later than his own, written in a strongly marked border dialect which may almost be called Scotch; and, therefore, they are not to be relied upon as evidence of the grammatical progress of the English language. They have much the air of a literary exercitation; for the eleven short poems of which the collection consists exhibit specimens of ten different metres and stanzas. These poems are of interest on account of their versification, and especially because they are the earliest political verses known to have been composed in this period of English literature, or, indeed, after the accession of Edward III. to the throne. The following two will suffice to give an idea of Minot's diction and merits as a poet: —

How Edward the king come in Braband,
And toke homage of all the land.

God, that schope both se and sand,
Save Edward king of Ingland,
Both body, saul, and life,
And grante him joy withowten strif!
For mani men to him er wroth,
In Fraunce and in Flandres both;
For he defendes fast his right,
And tharto Jhesu grante him might,
And so to do both night and day,
That yt may be to Goddes pay.
  Oure king was cumen, trely to tell,
Into Brabant for to dwell;
The kayser Lowis of Bavere,
That in that land than had no pere,
He, and als his sons two,
And other princes many mo,
Bisschoppes and prelates war thare fele,
That had ful mekil werldly wele,
Princes and pople, ald and ȝong,
Al that spac with Duche tung,
All thai come with grete honowre
Sir Edward to save and socoure,
And proferd him, with all thayre rede,
For to hald the kinges stede.
  The duke of Braband, first of all,
Swore, for thing that might bifall,
That he suld both day and night
Help sir Edward in his right,
In toun, in feld, in frith and fen.
This swore the duke and all his men,
And al the lordes that with him lend,
And tharto held thai up thaire hend.
Than king Edward toke his rest
At Andwerp, whare him liked best;
And thare he made his moné playne,
That no man suld say thare ogayne.
His moné, that was gude and lele,
Left in Braband ful mekill dele;

And all that land, untill this day,
Fars the better for that jornay.
  When Philip the Valas herd of this,
Tharat he was ful wroth iwis;
He gert assemble his barounes,
Princes and lordes of many tounes,
At Pariss toke thai thaire counsaile,
Whilk pointes might tham most availe;
And in all wise thai tham bithought
To stroy Ingland and bring to nought.
  Schipmen sone war efter sent,
To here the kinges cumandment;
And the galaies men also,
That wist both of wele and wo.
He cumand than that men suld fare
Till Ingland, and for no thing spare,
Bot brin and sla both man and wife,
And childe, that none suld pas with life.
  The galay men held up thaire handes,
And thanked God for thir tithandes.
  At Hamton, als I understand,
Come the gaylayes unto land,
And ful fast thai slogh and brend,
Bot noght so makill als sum men wend.
For or thai wened war thai mett
With men that sone thaire laykes lett.
Sum was knokked on the hevyd,
That the body thare bilevid;
Sum lay stareand on the sternes;
And sum lay knoked out their hernes,
Than with tham was non other gle,
Bot ful fain war thai that might fle.
The galay men, the suth to say,
Most nedes turn another way;
Thai soght the stremis fer and wide,
In Flandres and in Seland syde.
  Than saw thai whare Cristofer stode,
At Armouth, opon the flude.
Than wen[t] thai theder all bidene,
The galayes men, with hertes kene,
Viij. and xl. galays, and mo,
And with tham als war tarettes two,

And other many galiotes,
With grete noumber of smale botes;
All thai hoved on the flode
To stele sir Edward mens gode.
  Edward oure king than was noght there,
But sone, when it come to his ere,
He sembled all his men full still,
And said to tham what was his will.
Ilk man made him redy then,
So went the king and all his men
Unto thaire schippes ful hastily,
Als men that war in dede doghty.
  Thai fand the galay men grete wane,
A hundereth ever ogaynes ane;
The Inglis men put tham to were
Ful baldly, with bow and spere;
Thai slogh thare of the galaies men
Ever sexty ogaynes ten;
That sum ligges ȝit in that mire
All hevidles, withowten hire.
  The Inglis men war armed wele,
Both in yren and in stele;
Thai faght ful fast, both day and night,
Als long as tham lasted might.
Bot galay men war so many,
That Inglis men wex all wery;
Help thai soght, bot thare come nane,
Than unto God thai made thaire mane.
Bot sen the time that God was born,
Ne a hundreth ȝere biforn,
Was never men better in fight
Than Ingliss men, whil thai had myght.
Bot sone all maistri gan thai mis;
God bring thaire saules untill his blis!
And God assoyl tham of thaire sin,
For the gude will that thai war in! Amen.
  Listens now, and leves me,
Who so lifes thai sall se
That it mun be ful dere boght
That thir galay men have wroght.

Thai hoved still opon the flode,
And reved pover men thaire gude;
Thai robbed, and did mekill schame,
And aye bare Inglis men the blame.
Now Jhesu save all Ingland,
And blis it with his holy hand! Amen.

How Edward, als the Romance sais,
Held his sege bifor Calais.

Calais men, now may ye care,
And murning mun ȝe have to mede;
Mirth on mold get ȝe no mare,
Sir Edward sall ken ȝow ȝowre crede.
Whilum war ȝe wight in wede,
To robbing rathly for to ren;
Men ȝow sone of ȝowre misdede,
ȝowre care es cumen, will ȝe it ken.

Kend it es how ȝe war kene
Al Inglis men with dole to dere;
Thaire gudes toke ȝe al bidene,
No man born wald ȝe forbere;
ȝe spared noght with swerd ne spere
To stik tham, and thaire gudes to stele.
With wapin and with ded of were
Thus have ȝe wonnen werldes wele.

Weleful men war ȝe iwis;
Bot fer on fold sall ȝe noght fare.
A bare sal now abate ȝowre blis,
And wirk ȝow bale on bankes bare.
He sall ȝow hunt, als hund dose hare,
That in no hole sall ȝe ȝow hide.
For all ȝowre speche will he noght spare,
Bot bigges him right by ȝowre side.

Biside ȝow here the bare bigins
To big his boure in winter tyde;
And all bityme takes he his ines,
With semly se[r]gantes him biside.

The word of him walkes ful wide,
Jesu, save him fro mischance!
In bataill dar he wele habide
Sir Philip and sir John of France.

The Franche men er fers and fell,
And mase grete dray when thai er dight;
Of tham men herd slike tales tell,
With Edward think thai for to fight,
Him for to hald out of his right,
And do him treson with thaire tales.
That was thaire purpos, day and night,
Bi counsail of the cardinales.

Cardinales, with hattes rede,
War fro Calays wele thre myle;
Thai toke thaire counsail in that stede
How thai might sir Edward bigile.
Thai lended thare bot litill while,
Til Franche men to grante thaire grace.
Sir Philip was funden a file,
He fled, and faght noght in that place.

In that place the bare was blith,
For all was funden that he soght;
Philip the Valas fled ful swith,
With the batail that he had broght.
For to have Calays had he thoght,
All at his ledeing loud or still;
Bot all thaire wiles war for noght,
Edward wan it at his will.

Lystens now, and ȝe may lere,
Als men the suth may understand;
The knightes that in Calais were
Come to sir Edward sare wepeand,
In kirtell one, and swerd in hand,
And cried, 'Sir Edward, thine [we] are;
Do now, lord, bi law of land,
Thi will with us for evermare.'

The nobill burgase and the best
  Come unto him to have thaire hire;
The comun puple war ful prest
  Rapes to bring obout thaire swire.
  Thai said all, 'Sir Philip, oure syre,
And his sun, sir John of France,
  Has left us ligand in the mire,
And broght us till this doleful dance.

'Oure horses, that war faire and fat,
  Er etin up ilkone bidene;
Have we nowther conig ne cat,
  That thai ne er etin, and hundes kene,
  All er etin up ful clene,
Es nowther levid biche ne whelp;
  That es wele on oure sembland sene;
And thai er fled that suld us help.'

A knight that was of grete renowne,
  Sir John de Viene was his name,
He was wardaine of the toune,
  And had done Ingland mekill schame.
  For all thaire boste thai er to blame,
Ful stalworthly thare have thai strevyn.
  A bare es cumen to mak tham tame;
Kayes of the toun to him er gifen.

The kaies er ȝolden him of the ȝate,
  Lat him now kepe tham if he kun;
To Calais cum thai all to late,
  Sir Philip and Sir John his sun.
  Al war ful ferd that thare ware fun,
Thaire leders may thai barely ban.
  All on this wise was Calais won;
God save tham that it so gat wan.

The attempts of Minot, and of other later as well as contemporaneous rhymers, to reconcile the Gothic and Romance systems of verse — like many suggestions of compromise on more important subjects — satisfied the partisans of neither

mode of composition, and his example was followed by no great writer. Langlande and his school adhered strictly to the Saxon canons. Gower and Chaucer, and the great body of English poets, preferred Romance metres. Half-way measures failed altogether. Alliteration, it is true, was occasionally employed as a casual ornament, but the works of Langlande and his immediate followers were the last, of any merit, which regularly conformed to the canons of Anglo-Saxon verse, and the struggle ended with the final triumph of Romance forms.

The works of the English poets who followed Anglo-Saxon models, in the latter part of the fourteenth century, are among the most interesting and important literary productions of that age; and hence it becomes necessary to devote a moment to the metrical or rather rhythmical system of the ancient Anglian people, which, with one important difference, corresponds to that of the Scandinavian and some of the Germanic races. Ancient versification is founded on temporal quantity, modern on accentuation; but modern Romance verse agrees with the classical metres in requiring a certain number of syllables to each measure, and the accented syllables are, in number and position, subject to the same laws of regularity and sequence as the temporally long syllables in the classic metres. But in the primitive rhythmical poetry of the Scandinavians and the Anglo-Saxons, the number of unaccented syllables and the position of the accented ones, were variable, so that nothing was constant but the number of these latter. In the impassioned, emphatic recitative of ruder ages, this numerical regularity might be a sufficient formal distinction between poetry and prose; but when the lay of the bard was written down, and read, not chanted or declaimed, it was soon perceived that something more was required to enable verse to produce an agreeable sensuous effect upon the ear. This was first obtained by the simple expedient of alliteration; but as the poetic ear became more cultivated, and, of course, more fastidious and more exacting, other coincidences of sound were

introduced. The Scandinavians employed line-rhyme both as half and as perfect rhyme, that is, syllables which agreed in the consonants, but differed in the vowels, as *land, lend, fear, fire,* and syllables which agreed in all the vocal elements, or ordinary rhymes. In their poetry, these corresponding syllables occurred not at the ends of the lines, but in pairs in the same line, though, in the later stages of Icelandic literature, end-rhyme was employed also. This latter form of consonance was sometimes used by the Anglo-Saxons, — probably from an acquaintance with Continental rhymes which the Scandinavians did not possess, — but neither half-rhyme nor any form of line-rhyme seems ever to have been designedly introduced, though the Danish and Norwegian bards who frequented the courts of the Saxon kings must have made that form of versification known in England.

I do not find any satisfactory evidence that assonance, or the employment of the same vowel with different consonants, which characterizes the ballad poetry of Spain, was resorted to in the classic Anglo-Saxon period; but in the semi-Saxon of Layamon, as we have already seen, it is of frequent occurrence, and I have no doubt it was intentionally introduced. Critics, however, do not appear to have always recognized this coincidence of sound in Layamon as true assonance, and they have sometimes endeavoured to explain it by the gratuitous assumption, that syllables spelled with very different consonants were pronounced alike, so as to make perfect rhymes of pairs of words which are apparently assonant merely. This resemblance of vowel alone proved too monotonous for the Northern ear, which was trained by its habitual system of strong inflection to demand contrast as well as coincidence of syllable, and the innovation of Layamon found no imitators.

During the era of transition from the Anglo-Saxon to the English nationality and speech, the native bards were imitators of Norman-French poetry, and the Saxon versification fell into almost total disuse, while nearly every variety of Romance verse

was freely employed. But when the English people had undergone the last of their metamorphoses, and appeared as a new estate upon the stage of human affairs, there was naturally a hesitation, a vacillation, with regard to the forms in which the nascent literature should clothe itself, and there were still conflicting tendencies and partialities to be reconciled.

While, therefore, the first great English poets were as thoroughly and unmistakeably national, in matter and in spirit, as the most marked of their successors, we find in Chaucer only Romance forms of composition; but in Langlande, the author of Piers Ploughman, and his followers, purely English thoughts, and a well assimilated composite diction, with the rhythmic and alliterative structure which characterizes Anglo-Saxon verse. It is remarkable, as I have elsewhere observed, that in this attempt to revive those obsolete measures, Langlande adhered more closely to the normal forms, and allowed himself fewer licenses, than did the Anglo-Saxons themselves; and his poems accordingly exhibit more truly the essential characteristics of alliterative and rhythmical verse than any of the works of the masters he copied.

Hence, though highly original, thoroughly genial, and fully imbued with the spirit of the age and of the commonwealth of which he was the first-born intellectual son, yet, in his versification, he was little better than a servile imitator. This is by no means a singular instance of the constraint which the employment of ancient instrumentalities imposes upon a modern author. No scholar of our day, writing in Latin prose, would think himself safe in joining together any two words, for the combination of which he could not adduce the authority of a classic example, nor, in hexameters, or the lyric metres, would he venture a succession of syllables for which he could not find a precedent in the Gradus ad Parnassum.

The strife between the Romance and the Saxon forms of verse was not of long duration. Besides the reasons I have already given for the triumph of the former, there was the

fact that Anglo-Saxon poetry was obsolete, unintelligible, dead and forgotten, while Norman-French literature was still a living, a luxuriant and a fragrant vine. Langlande was the last of the old school in form, the first of the new in genius and spirit. The authors of Piers Ploughman and of the Canterbury Tales are both intensely English; but as two sons of the same parentage, while closely resembling each other, often reproduce, the one, the mother's traits, the other, the lineaments of the father, so Langlande most prominently exhibits the Anglo-Saxon, Chaucer the Norman-French, complexion and features of the composite race, which they so well represent and adorn.

There is not much literary matter of special interest or importance, which can be positively assigned to the period between Minot and Langlande; but there are numerous versified romances, chiefly translations from the French, which were executed, or at least transcribed, in the course of the fourteenth century. Most of these, as I have before remarked, are carelessly copied, and they are often stamped with dialectic peculiarities which certainly belong to no era of the common literary dialect of England. They could, therefore, even if possessed of conspicuous literary merit, not well be employed as illustrations of sketches which aim to give an outline of the progress, not of the aberrations, of the English language. But they are, in general, so worthless in themselves, that they would not repay an analysis, and I prefer to limit myself to productions which were either efficient causes, or normal results and exemplifications, of the march of English genius and the English speech.

The following poem, written on a very important occasion — the death of Edward III., in 1377 — is smooth in versification, and is a not unfavourable specimen of the power of expression to which the language had attained at that period: —

ON THE DEATH OF EDWARD III.—1377.

A! dere God, what may this be,
  That alle thing weres and wasteth away?
Frendschyp is but a vanyté,
  Unnethe hit dures al a day.
  Thei beo so cliper at assay,
So leof to han, and loth to lete,
  And so fikel in heore fay,
That selden iseiȝe is sone forȝete.

I sei hit not withouten a cause,
  And therefore takes riht god hede;
For ȝif ye construwe this clause,
  I puit ȝou holly out of drede,
  That puire schame ȝor hert wold blede,
And ȝe this matere wysly trete.
  He that was ur most spede
Is selden seye and sone forȝete.

Sum tyme an Englis schip we had,
  Nobel hit was, and heih of tour;
Thorw al Christendam hit was drad,
  And stif wold stonde in uch a stour,
  And best dorst byde a scharp schour,
And other stormes smale and grete;
  Nou is that schip, that bar the flour,
Selden seiȝe and sone forȝete.

Into that schip ther longeth a roothur,
  That steered the schip, and governed hit;
In al this world nis such anothur,
  As me thenketh in my wit.
  Whil schip and rothur togeder was knit,
Thei dredde nother tempest, druyȝe, nor wete;
  Nou be thei bothe in synder flit;
That selden seiȝe is sone forȝete.

Scharpe wawes that schip has sayled,
  And sayed all sees at aventur;
For wynt ne wederes never hit fayled,
  Wil the roothur miht enduir.

Thouȝ the see were rouȝ, or elles dimuuir,
Gode havenes that schip wold geete.
Nou is that schip, I am wel suir,
Selde iseye and sone forȝete.

This good schip I may remene
To the chivalrye of this londe;
Sum tyme thei counted nouȝt a bene
Beo al Fraunce, ich understonde.
Thei toke and slouȝ hem with her wonde,
The power of Fraunce, bethe smale and grete;
And brouȝt the kyng hider to byde her bonde;
And nou riht sone hit is forȝete.

That schip hadde a ful siker mast,
And a sayl strong and large,
That make the gode schip never agast
To undertake a thinge of charge.
And to that schip ther longed a barge,
Of al Fraunce ȝaf nouȝt a cleete.
To us hit was a siker targe;
And now riht clene hit is forȝete,

The rother was nouther ok ne elm,
Hit was Edward the thridde the noble kniht;
The prince his sone bar up his helm,
That never scoumfited was in fiht.
The kyng him rod and rouwed ariht,
The prince dredde nouther stok nor streete.
Nou of hem we lete ful liht;
That selden is seiȝe is sone forȝete.

The swifte barge was duk Henri,
That noble kniht, and wel assayed;
And in his leggaunce worthily
He abod mony a bitter brayd.
ȝif that his enemys ouȝt outrayed,
To chasteis hem wolde he not lete.
Nou is that lord ful lowe ileyd;
That selde is seiȝe is sone forȝete.

This gode comunes, bi the rode,
  I likne hem to the schipes mast;
That with heore catel and with heore goode
  Mayntened the werre both furst and last.
  The wynd that bleuȝ the schip with blast,
Hit was gode preȝeres, I sey hit atrete;
  Nou is devoutnes out icast,
And mony gode dedes ben clene forȝete.

Thus ben this lordes ileid ful lowe;
  The stok is of the same rote;
And ympe biginnes for to growe,
  And ȝit I hope schal ben ur bote,
  To wolde his fomen underfote,
And as a lord be set in sete.
  Crist, lene that he so mote,
That selden iseiȝe be not forȝete.

Weor that impe ffully growe,
  That he had sarri, sap, and pith,
I hope he schulde be kud and knowe
  For conquerour of moni a kith.
  He is ful livelich in lyme and lith
In armes to travayle and to swete.
  Crist, live we so fare him with,
That selden seiȝe be never forȝete.

And therefore holliche I ou rede,
  Til that this ympe beo fulli growe,
That uch a mon up with the hede,
  And mayntene him bothe heiȝe and lowe.
  The Frensche men cunne bothe bost and blowe,
And with heore scornes us to-threte;
  And we beoth bothe unkuynde and slowe,
That selden seiȝe is sone forȝete.

And therfore, gode sires, taketh reward
  Of ȝor douhti kyng that deyȝede in age,
And to his sone prince Edward
  That welle was of alle corage.

Such two lordes of heiȝe parage
Is not in eorthe whom we schal gete.
And nou heore los beginneth to swage,
That selde iseiȝe is sone forȝete.

Another poem which is not without some philological importance, and which is of interest for the light it throws on the manners of the higher classes of society in the fourteenth century, and their probable mode of education, is the Boke of Curtasye, an edition of which has been published by the Camden Society. This is a species of School of good Manners, for pages who were themselves of gentle birth. It discloses a coarseness of habits in the more elevated classes, strangely contrasting with the material luxury which seems, from other evidence, to have prevailed at that period in royal and noble circles. The Forme of Cury—which is stated to have been 'compiled of the chef Maister Cokes of kyng Richard the Secunde kyng of Englond after the Conquest,' and which exists in a manuscript certainly nearly as old as the beginning of the fifteenth century—shows that the kitchens of its time were, in variety and sensual piquancy, little inferior to those of Lucullus and Apicius. But English luxury, in the fourteenth century, was confined chiefly to the gratification of the grosser appetites; and costly and diversified indulgence of these by no means implies refinement and elegance of manners and sentiment, but, on the contrary, rather supposes a sensuality of constitution, which easily degenerates into a clownish disregard of the graceful conventionalities, and even of the decencies, of civilized life.

The Boke of Curtasye is contained in the same manuscript with the *Liber Cocorum*, a cookery-book of the fourteenth century, the publication of which, as well as of others of the same class, Wright suggests as a desideratum. The vocabulary of books on these and kindred unfamiliar subjects is rich in terms rarely elsewhere met with, and they furnish much information both on the tastes and habits of mediæval Europe, particularly

on a topic which, though of profound interest, has engaged the attention of competent scholars less than almost any other branch of modern history — the commercial relations between the different European states and between Europe and the East. The trade of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries was conducted on a larger scale, and a more extensively ramified and more cunningly organized system, than is usually suspected by persons not familiar with the chronicles, and more especially the non-literary records of the Middle Ages. The questions: what were the articles which the great merchants of the Mediterranean countries imported from the East, at different periods between the downfall of Rome and the discovery of the Cape of Good Hope; by what mode of exchange and by what routes of transport did they obtain them; and, above all, where and by what instrumentalities these articles were distributed — have been as yet but imperfectly answered. Researches in that direction — which the throwing open of secret archives is so rapidly facilitating — will furnish elucidations of many obscure passages in early literature, and, especially, advance our knowledge of historical etymology, for which, linguistic conjecture is, in very many departments of philology, a very poor substitute.

Much of the Boke of Curtasye is too repulsive for quotation. The following passage seems to show that pages did not receive a great amount of literary instruction, but it gives a more favourable impression of their moral training than the lives of their lords would authorise us to expect.

Yff that thou be a ȝong enfaunt,
And thenke tho scoles for to haunt,
This lessoun schulle thy maister the merke,
Cros Crist the spede in alle thi werke;
Sytthen thy *Pater Noster* he wille the teche,
As Cristes owne postles con preche;
After thy *Ave Maria* and thi *Crede*,
That shalle the save at dome of drede;
Thenne aftur to blesse the with the Trinité,
In nomine Patris teche he wille the;

Then with Marke, Mathew, Luke, and Jon,
With the *pro cruce* and the hegh name;
To shryve the in general thou shalle lere,
Thy *confiteor* and *misereatur* in fere;
To seche the kyngdam of God, my chylde,
Thereto y rede thou be not wylde.
Therefore worschip God, bothe olde and ȝong,
To be in body and soule y-liche strong.
When thou comes to the churche dore,
Take the haly water stondand on flore;
Rede or synge or byd prayeris
To Crist, for alle thy Crysten ferys;
Be curtayse to God, and knele doun
On bothe knees with grete devocioun.
To mon thou shalle knele opon the toun,
The tother to thyself thou halde alone.
When thou ministers at the hegh autere,
With bothe hondes thou serve tho prest in fere,
The ton to stabulle the tother,
Lest thou fayle, my dere brother.
Another curtasye y wylle the teche,
Thy fadur and modur, with mylde speche,
Thou worschip and serve with alle thy myȝt,
That thou dwelle the lengur in erthely lyȝt.
To another man do no more amys,
Then thou woldys be done of hym and hys,
So Crist thou pleses, and gets the love
Of menne and God that syttes above.
Be not to meke, but in mene the holde,
ffor ellis a fole thou wylle be tolde.
He that to ryȝtwysnes wylle enclyne,
As holy wryȝt says us wele and fyne,
His sede schalle never go seche nor brede,
Ne suffur of mon no shames dede.
To forgyf thou shalle the hast,
To venjaunce loke thou come on last;
Draw the to pese with alle thy strengthe,
ffro stryf and bate draw the on lengthe.
Yf mon aske the good for Goddys sake,
And the wont thyng wherof to take,

Gyf hym bone wordys on fayre manere,
With glad semblaint and pure good cher.
Also of service thou shalle be fre
To every mon in hys degré.
Thou schalle never lose for to be kynde,
That on forȝets another hase in mynde.
Yf any man have part with the in gyft,
With hym thou make an even skyft;
Let hit not henge in honde for glose,
Thou art uncurtayse yf thou hyt dose.
To sayntes yf thou thy gate hase hyȝt,
Thou schalle fulfylle hit with alle thy myȝt,
Lest God the stryk with grete venjaunce,
And pyt the into sore penaunce.
Leve not alle men that speke the fayre,
Whether that hit ben comyns, burges, or mayr;
In swete wordis the nedder was closet,
Disseyvaunt ever and mysloset;
Therfore thou art of Adams blode,
With wordis be ware, but thou be wode;
A short worde is comynly sothe,
That first slydes fro monnes tothe.
Loke lyȝer never that thou become,
Kepe thys worde for alle and somme.
Lawȝe not to of[t] for no solace,
ffor no kyn myrth that any man mase;
Who lawes all that men may se,
A schrew or a fole hym semes to be.

LECTURE VII.

THE AUTHOR OF PIERS PLOUGHMAN AND HIS IMITATORS.

THE precise date of the poem called the Vision of Piers Ploughman is unknown, but there is little doubt that it was given to the world between the years 1360 and 1370. The authorship of the work is also matter of uncertainty, and the tradition which ascribes it to Langlande, an English monk, is not supported by conclusive testimony. But a perhaps imaginary Langlande has long enjoyed the credit of the composition, and until evidence shall be adduced to invalidate his possessory claim and establish an adverse title, there can be no danger of doing injustice to the real author by availing ourselves of that name as a convenient impersonation of an unknown writer.

The familiarity which the poet displays with ecclesiastical literature could, in that age, hardly have been attained by any but a member of the clerical profession, and therefore the presumption is strong that he was a churchman. His zeal and his conviction did not carry him to such perilous lengths as were hazarded by Wycliffe and his school, but he was a forerunner in the same path, and though we know nothing of his subsequent history, it is not improbable that he ultimately arrived at the same results.

The author of Piers Ploughman was evidently well acquainted with the Latin poems ascribed to Walter de Mapes, written chiefly in the previous century, and of which I have been unable to take notice in this succinct view of early English literature, because, having been composed in Latin, they cannot properly

be included in a historical sketch of English philology. But though there are passages in Piers Ploughman, which, if they stood alone, might be considered as directly borrowed from Mapes, yet the general treatment of the subject by Langlande is so peculiar, that the whole work must be pronounced eminently original, in the sense in which that epithet is usually and properly applied, in literary criticism, to discursive and imaginative productions.

Every great popular writer is, in a certain sense, a product of his country and his age, a reflection of the intellect, the moral sentiment and the prevailing social opinions of his time. The author of Piers Ploughman, no doubt, embodied in a poetic dress just what millions felt, and perhaps hundreds had uttered in one fragmentary form or another. His poem as truly expressed the popular sentiment, on the subjects it discussed, as did the American Declaration of Independence the national thought and feeling on the relations between the Colonies and Great Britain. That remarkable document disclosed no previously unknown facts, advanced no new political opinions, proclaimed no sentiment not warranted by previous manifestations of popular doctrine and the popular will, employed perhaps even no new combination of words, in incorporating into one proclamation the general results to which the American head and heart had arrived. Nevertheless, Jefferson, who drafted it, is as much entitled to the credit of originality, as he who has best expressed the passions and emotions of men in the shifting scenes of the drama or of song.

The Vision of Piers Ploughman thus derives its interest, not from the absolute novelty of its revelations, but partly from its literary form, partly from the moral and social bearings of its subject—the corruptions of the nobility and of the several departments of the government, the vices of the clergy and the abuses of the church—in short, from its connection with the actual life and opinion of its time, into which it gives us a clearer insight than many a laboured history. Its dialect, its tone, and

its poetic dress alike conspired to secure to the Vision a wide circulation among the commonalty of the realm, and, by formulating—to use a favourite word of the day—sentiments almost universally felt, though but dimly apprehended, it brought them into distinct consciousness, and thus prepared the English people for the reception of the seed, which the labours of Wycliffe and his associates were already sowing among them.

The number of early manuscripts of this work which still survive proves its general diffusion; and the wide variations which exist between the copies show that they had excited interest enough to be thought worthy of careful revision by the original author, or, as is more probable, of important modification by the numerous editors and transcribers under whose recension they subsequently passed. This, indeed, was the custom of the time; but in most cases, copyists only accommodated the dialect of the author to that of their own age or district, or, at most, added here and there an explanatory gloss, whereas in some of the later manuscripts of Piers Ploughman, a very different tone of sentiment prevails from that which marks what is believed to be the original text of the work. It had become eminently a popular possession, a didactic catechism. This fact and its anonymous character would be thought to justify licenses in copyists, whereas the works of Gower and Chaucer came in a purely literary form, and with an authority derived from the social position of the writers, which secured them from being so freely tampered with by later editors; and consequently the differences between different manuscripts of those authors are generally grammatical or orthographical merely.

The querulous tone of Piers Ploughman is another circumstance which gave it special favour in the eyes of the populace, or rather of the middle classes, which had acquired a certain degree of opulence and culture, but yet not strength enough to be able to protect themselves effectually against the rapacity of their spiritual and temporal lords.

The people, under all governments—at least under all those

whose subjects enjoy any acknowledged positive rights as against the sovereign power—are habitually disposed to complaint. This is especially true of the English, who, with a government almost uniformly better, in its internal administration, than those of any of their Continental neighbours, have always been a nation of good-natured grumblers. Political satires, complaints with a strong spice of humour and a liberal share of personality, are particularly acceptable to that people, and frequency and freedom of such criticism on governmental action has, under most reigns, been a characteristic of the public life of England. The extortion of Magna Charta was a manifestation of English character, and the spirit of that instrument, which was broader than its letter, has fostered the inclination, and secured the right, of the subject to sit in judgment on his ruler.

If we compare the earliest writings which are distinctively English in temper and language, including Piers Ploughman as their best and truest representative, with those of the Anglo-Saxons, we shall find that certain salient traits which mark the English are almost wholly wanting in Saxon. The element of humour, though in a very different sense from that in which the word is used in the dialect of German criticism*, is, and from the fourteenth century has been, eminently characteristic of English literature. This trait does not exist in the extant remains of Anglo-Saxon poetry or prose, nor does it appear to have formed an ingredient in the character of that people.

The quality of humour is everywhere, in some measure, the fruit of culture. Not only savages, but all rude races who have to struggle against an ungenial climate, and a soil which yields no spontaneous fruits, are grave. Wit and humour are products of that stage of civilization, which belongs to such a develop-

* English humour is often at once pathetic and laughter-moving; German humour is, not unfrequently, very dreary, without being either. In this censure, I do not, certainly, include the tales of Musæus, still less the wonderful works of Jean Paul, the prince of genuine humourists. Some of Tieck's stories are full of this quality, and I think there are, in modern literature, few more humorous tales than his autobiography of the tailor-emperor, Tonelli, in the ninth volume of his collected works.

ment of the material resources of a country as leaves to its more prosperous inhabitants some leisure for other occupations than the serious toils and hazards of war, or the lonely and silent and weary pursuits of the chase—for to those who live by woodcraft, hunting is a solitary labour, not a social recreation.

The degree of artificial culture which is required for the generation of such products will be very different under different climates and other natural conditions. In the frozen North, and on the infertile sands of a tropical desert, where constant effort is required to supply the physical wants of life, these sparkling traits of thought will not manifest themselves, except under the influence of letters. But under more genial skies, where Earth almost spontaneously feeds her children, the poetic impulses and aspects of Nature herself supply a culture, which seems in some degree to render the artificial training of schools and of books superfluous, and to endow the most untaught with a quickness of apprehension, and a keenness of perception of less obvious analogies, which, in less favoured climes, are almost always acquired, not self-developed, faculties. Besides this, in those countries which were the seats of ancient civilization, a traditional culture has survived the revolutions of many centuries and still pervades the lowest strata of society.* The remains

* The traditions of Italy have kept alive, in the memory of the people, not only numerous fragments of ancient history, but many of the romantic dreams and visions of the Middle Ages. The progress of knowledge in the Northern states of Italy has, within a few years, diffused a taste for reading among classes, which, less than a generation since, never looked upon a printed page. The subjects selected naturally connect themselves with the traditions I have spoken of, and at this moment, in Piedmont and Lombardy, the favourite books, among the least-instructed ranks who read at all, are the old romances of chivalry. Of these, the REALI DI FRANCIA nei quali si contiene la generazione degli Imperatori, Re, Duchi, Principi, Baroni e Paladini di Francia, cominciando da Costantino Emperatore sino ad Orlando, Conte d' Anglante, and, GUERINO DETTO IL MESCHINO, storia delle grandi imprese e vittorie da lui riportate contro i Turchi, are the most popular. Cheap editions of these are multiplied and sold in great numbers, and they are read by thousands of persons in conditions of life in which, in England and America, nothing is ever heard of the 'dowzepers' of him, who

With all his peerage fell
At Fontarabia.

of classic art, and the vague memories of by-gone national power and splendour, contribute also to educate and refine classes which, in younger races and more recently subdued regions, fall below the reach of all elevating influences.

Hence while the Gothic tribes, though profound and strong in intellect, are obtuse till artificially quickened by education, the Romance nations are rapid and precocious in the operations of the intellect, sensible to artistic beauty, alive to the charms of nature, and ever awake to the sense of the ludicrous. The populace of Europe who laugh the most, and have the most mirth-inspiring dialect and habits, are the Neapolitan plebeians; but a Styrian or a Carinthian peasant, with the same amount of positive attainment which the humble Italian possesses, is as solemn not to say as stupid as the cattle he drives.

The distinction between wit and humour is not very easily expressed or apprehended, as is abundantly shown by the thousand abortive attempts to discriminate between them; and it is as difficult to define either as to describe the smile they kindle.

Wit has been said to consist in the perception of obscure relations, and this half-truth explains how it is that men of multifarious reading—whose knowledge, of course, reveals to them analogies not obvious to less instructed minds—are never without wit.

I shall not attempt what none has yet satisfactorily accomplished, the description and limitation of wit and humour, nor is any discussion of the special character of the former essential to our present purpose; but we may say, in a general way, that while true wit is as universal as social culture, humour is localized and national, and the distinctive forms in which different peoples clothe the ludicrous conceptions peculiar to themselves and almost inappreciable by strangers, constitute their national humour.

English humour, then, is Anglicized wit. It is a spark thrown out whenever the positive and negative electricities of the French

and Saxon constituents of the English intellect are passing into equilibrium, and no great English writer has ever been able wholly to suppress it. Piers Ploughman is pervaded with humour, and this quality undoubtedly contributed, in a great degree, to its general popularity.

The familiarity of even the labouring classes with this work, and the strong hold it soon acquired on the popular mind, are well illustrated in the curious letter addressed to the commons of Essex by the enlightened, brave, and patriotic John Ball, who is conspicuous as one of the few clerical advocates of the rights of man, in the Middle Ages.* In this letter, the reformer introduces the names of John Schep or Shepherd—borrowed probably, as Wright suggests, from the opening lines of the poem:

> I shoop me into shroudes
> As I a sheep weere,—

and that of Piers Ploughman, as personages familiar to those whom he was addressing; and in another part of the letter, he quotes, in an emphatic way, the phrases 'do well' and 'do better,' which are of very frequent occurrence in the Vision as

* I take the text of this letter from the Introduction to Wright's edition of Piers Ploughman:

'John *Schep*, sometime Seint Mary priest of Yorke, and now of Colchester, graeteth well John Namelesse, and John the Miller, and John Carter, and biddeth them that they beware of guyle in borough, and stand together in Gods name, and biddeth *Piers Ploweman goe to his werke*, and chastise well Hob the robber, and take with you John Trewman, and all his fellows, and no moe. John the Miller hath y-ground smal, small, small. The kings sonne of heaven shall pay for all. Beware or ye be woe, know your frende fro your foe, have ynough, and say hoe: And *do wel and better*, and flee sinne, and seeke peace and holde you therin, and so biddeth John Trewman and all his fellowes.'

The orthography *Schep* suggests the probability that the form *sheep*, in the couplet quoted above, is erroneous, and undoubtedly the word, when used for *shepherd*, had a different pronunciation from that given to it when it was simply the name of the quadruped.

The letter is interesting, not only from its connection with the poem, Piers Ploughman, but as a specimen of an *argot*, or conventional dialect; for there can be no doubt that such phrases as 'guyle in borough' 'do wel and better,' and the like, had some other than their apparent and literal meaning,

the designations of two of the allegorical dramatis personæ of the poem. It is probable that in this case John Schep and Piers Ploughman, as well as the other proper names used in the letter, were appellations assumed as a disguise by real persons, though the people of Essex doubtless well knew who were meant by them.

But whether we suppose these names to be here used as indicating a class, or as the *noms de guerre* of individuals, the fact of their employment for the one purpose, or their assumption for the other, proves that their poetical and political significance, and of course the general scope of the poem, were well understood by the humblest class of English citizens who were open to any form of literary influence.

As I have already remarked, a circumstance which gives importance to Piers Ploughman and its imitations is, the form of poetical composition in which they are dressed. The verse is neither metrical nor rhymed; but it is characterized by rhythm and alliteration, according to the Anglo-Saxon models of versification, and, as was observed in the last lecture, it conforms more closely to the conventional rules of Anglo-Saxon poetical composition than any of the existing remains of the poetry of that literature. This fact has been partly explained by the circumstance that it was an imitation of an extinct poetical form; but it is also an evidence that the influence of the Danish invaders — whose bards employed rhythm and alliteration with greater strictness than the Anglo-Saxons had ever done — had some weight in reviving the taste for a form of verse which had become obsolete in the indigenous literature of England. On the other hand, it suggests the probability that rhythm and regular alliteration, though they had nearly disappeared from written native poetry, may have been kept alive in popular ballads, existing in oral tradition to a greater extent than written records now remaining would authorize us to infer.*

* For an account of Anglo-Saxon and old English alliterative measures, see First Series, Lecture XXV. It has been conjectured that there was, in this

The Vision of the Ploughman furnishes abundant evidence of the familiarity of its author with the Latin Scriptures, the writings of the fathers, and the commentaries of Romish expositors, but exhibits very few traces of a knowledge of Romance literature. Still the proportion of Norman-French words, or at least of words which, though of Latin origin, are French in form, is quite as great as in the works of Chaucer. The familiar use of this mixed vocabulary, in a poem evidently intended for the popular ear, and composed by a writer who gives no other evidence of an acquaintance with the literature of France, would, were other proof wanting, tend strongly to confirm the opinion I have before advanced, that a large infusion of French words had been, not merely introduced into the literature, but already incorporated into the common language of England; and that only a very small proportion of those employed by the poets were first introduced by them.

The poem, if not altogether original in conception, is abundantly so in treatment. The spirit it breathes, its imagery, the turn of thought, the style of illustration and argument it employs, are as remote as possible from the tone of Anglo-Saxon poetry, but exhibit the characteristic moral and mental traits of the Englishman, as clearly and unequivocally as the most national portions of the works of Chaucer or of any other native writer.

The Vision has little unity of plan, and indeed — considered as a satire against many individual and not obviously connected abuses in church and state — it needed none. But its aim and purpose are one. It was not an expostulation with temporal

ancient verse, as well as in Greek and Latin classical poetry, some yet undiscovered metrical element, the proper application of which rendered it more melodious to the ear than our rugged accentuation makes it. But the Anglo-Saxon system was evidently identical with the Icelandic, except that it wanted half and whole rhyme; and Snorri Sturluson—whose very full and complete Icelandic Art of Poetry, written about the middle of the thirteenth century, is still extant — does not allude to any characteristic of verse but alliteration, whole and half, line and terminal, rhyme, and accent, though he is very minute in his analysis of all the constituents of poetic form.

and spiritual rulers, not an attempt to awaken their consciences, or excite their sympathies, and thus induce them to repent of the sins and repair the wrongs they had committed; nor was it an attack upon the theology of the Church of Rome, or a revolutionary appeal to the passions of the multitude. It was a calm, allegorical exposition of the corruptions of the state, of the church, and of social life, designed, not to rouse the people to violent resistance or bloody vengeance, but to reveal to them the true causes of the evils under which they were suffering, and to secure the reformation of those grievous abuses, by a united exertion of the moral influence which generally accompanies the possession of superior physical strength.

The allegory, and more especially the dream or vision, is, in the simpler stages of society, and consequently in the early literature of most nations, a favourite euphemistic form for the announcement of severe, or otherwise disagreeable truths. Its capacity of double interpretation might serve as a retreat for the dreamer in case of apprehended persecution, and when once it had become a common mode of censuring social or political grievances, it would continue to be employed by those who no longer needed the disguise of equivocal language, merely because it was the usual form in which the inferior expressed his dissatisfaction with the administration or the corruptions of the superior power.

While, therefore, Wycliffe, at a somewhat later day, assumed a posture of open hostility to the papal church, by attacking some of the cardinal doctrines on which the supremacy of the see of Rome is founded, the Vision of Piers Ploughman had not taken so advanced a position. At the same time, it was extremely well calculated to suggest opinions which it did not itself openly profess; and the readers, who recognized the truth of the pictures of social and ecclesiastical depravity there presented, could hardly fail to suspect the necessity of adopting some more energetic measures of reform than a mere resort to moral suasion. Hence there is no doubt that the Vision, and,

a few years after, the Creed, of Piers Ploughman, — which latter is more exclusively directed against the corruptions of the Romish Church, — powerfully aided in promoting the reception of the doctrines of Wycliffe, encouraged the circulation of the new English versions of the Scriptures, and thus planted, deep in the English mind, the germ of that religious revolution which was so auspiciously begun and perfected in the sixteenth century, as well as of the political reforms which followed, a hundred years later.

I shall not go much into detail in giving a general view of the structure of this interesting and remarkable poem. No branch of criticism is less generally profitable or instructive than that which discusses the plan of literary compositions, except in reference to the drama, the special aim of which is the exhibition of the entire moral character and internal life of individuals, considered as types of humanity in its almost infinitely varied phases. The exposition of the plan of a work of imagination no more helps us to form a conception of the impression we derive from the production itself, than a description of a skeleton would aid us in constructing a visual image of the person of a Washington. It is the muscular form, the circulating fluids, the coloured integuments, that give life and individuality to organic objects and to the products of the organized fancy; and the actual perusal of a poem is as essential to an idea of it as a whole, as the sight of a man to a clear notion of his personality. Every primitive, incipient literature is spontaneous and unconscious, not premeditated and critical. In this stage of art, or rather of impulsive composition, narrative and discursive works of imagination are written without a plan. The poem shapes and organizes itself as it grows; and it may be remarked that in the majority of cases where authors have themselves set forth the scheme and purport of their allegories, it has been found difficult, if not impossible, to recognize the professed plan in the finished work.

But to return. The dreamer of the Vision, 'weary, for-

wandered,' falls asleep 'on a May morwenynge on Malverne hilles,' the poet thus happily suggesting, at the commencement of the poem, the cheerful images belonging to the return of spring and the beautiful scenery for which that locality is still famous. He sees the inhabitants of the earth gathered in a fair meadow before him, and observes their various ranks and occupations, devoting a large part of his description to an account of the different orders of the monastic and secular clergy, religious mendicants and pilgrims, and depicting in strong language their worldliness and depravity.

I fond there freres,
Alle the foure ordres,
Prechynge the peple
For profit of hemselve;
Glosed the gospel,
As hem good liked;
For coveitise of copes,
Construwed it as thei wolde.

This sketch, with the old fable of belling the cat, occupies the introduction. In the first section, or *Passus*, as the writer styles it, a heavenly messenger, the personification of 'holi chirche,' appears to the dreamer, and bestows explanations, warnings and counsels upon him. In the second Passus, he observes 'on his left half' a woman, who is thus described:—

I loked on my left half,
As the lady me taughte,
And was war of a womman
Worthiliche y-clothed,
Purfiled with pelure
The fyneste upon erthe,
Y-corouned with a coroune,
The kyng hath noon bettre;
Fetisliche[1] hire fyngres
Were fretted with gold wyr,

[1] *fetisliche*, elegantly, Norman-French, faictissement, from Lat. facere.

And theron rede rubies
As rede as any gleede,[1]
And diamaundes of derrest pris,
And double manere saphires,
Orientals[2] and ewages,[3]
Envenymes[4] to destroye.
  Hire robe was ful riche,
Of reed scarlet engreyned,
With ribanes of reed gold
And of riche stones.
Hire array me ravysshed,
Swich richesse saugh I nevere;
I hadde wonder what she was,
And whos wif she were.

This lady, as Holy Chirche informs him, is Mede, or what the English Scriptures call *lucre*, and 'in the popes paleis' is as familiar as Holi Chirche herself. His visitor now leaves him, and in the remainder of the second, as well as in the third and fourth sections, the dreamer observes how all, high and low, rich and poor, lay and clergy, alike offer their homage to Mede or Lucre, who contracts a legal marriage with Falsehood. In the third Passus, Mede is taken into favour at court, and is much caressed by the friars, though her intrigues are sometimes thwarted by Conscience, who seems to have greater influence with the king than with the priesthood. The king proposes a new matrimonial alliance between Mede and Conscience, to which proposal the latter replies: —

[1] *gleede*, burning or glowing coal. [2] *oriental*, red sapphire. [3] *ewage*, defined by Wright, with a query as to its source, 'a kind of precious stone,' is the *aqua-marine*, sea-water or green beryl. Eau, in old French, was spelled in a great variety of ways, and, among others, eauwe, eawe, eaige, and hence *ewage*, as also, notwithstanding its resemblance to the A.-S. huer or hwer, Icel. hverr, *ewer*, a water-vessel. [4] *envenymes to destroye*. The ruby, and many other precious stones, were worn in the Middle Ages as amulets against poison; and they were believed by many medical men to exert a physical agency, as remedial agents, in the healing of wounds, whether from poisoned or unpoisoned weapons. Recipes for the application of them may be found of as late date as the seventeenth century.

Crist it me forbede!
Er I wedde swiche a wif,
Wo me bitide!
For she is frele of hire feith,
Fikel of hire speche,
And maketh men mysdo
Many score tymes;
Trust of hire tresor
Bitrayeth ful manye.

He thus proceeds to state his objections to the match, at great length, bringing out the abuses in Church and State, of which Mede, or the love of lucre, is the cause, but finally proposes to leave the question to the decision of Reason. Peace now enters upon the scene as a suitor to parliament for redress for grievances inflicted upon him by Wrong, and Reason and Conscience prevail with the king, who announces his determination to govern his realm according to the advice of Reason. This concludes the fourth section and the first vision.

The dreamer 'waked of his wynkyng' and attempted to proceed on his pilgrimage, but

wo was withalle
That [he] ne hadde slept sadder,
And y-seighen moore.

Becoming fatigued, he, like many other good Christians before and since his time,

sat softely a-doun,
And seide his bileve,
And so he bablede on his bedes,
Thei broughte him a-slepe.

He now has a second vision, in which he again

seigh the feld ful of folk,

and Reason preaching repentance to different classes of offenders, each of which is personified by the name of the sin to which it is addicted. One of the chief sinners is Coveitise, who, after a

long and curious voluntary confession, is subjected to a cross-examination by Repentance.

The following is an extract: —

'I have ben coveitous,' quod this caytif,
'I bi-knowe[1] it here,
For som tyme I served
Symme-atte-Style,
And was his prentice y-plight
His profit to wayte.
'First I lerned to lye,
A leef outher tweyne;
Wikkedly to weye
Was my firste lesson;
To Wy and to Wynchestre
I wente to the feyre,
With many manere marchaundise,
As my maister me highte.
Ne hadde the grace of gyle y-go
Amonges my chaffare,
It hadde ben unsold this seven yer,
So me God helpe!
'Thanne drough I me among drapiers,
My donet[2] to lerne,
To drawe the liser[3] along,
The lenger it semed;
Among the riche rayes
I rendred a lesson,
To broche hem with a pak-nedle,
And playte hem togideres,
And putte hem in a presse,
And pyne hem therinne,
Til ten yerdes or twelve
Hadde tolled out thrittene.
'My wif was a webbe,
And wollen cloth made;
She spak to spynnesteres

[1] *bi-knowe*, confess, Ger. bekennen. [2] *donet*, a name applied to grammars from Donatus, the author of a celebrated Latin accidence and syntax, and, afterwards, to any manual of instruction, or set of rules. [3] *liser*, selvage.

To spynnen it oute,
Ac the pound that she paied by
Peised a quatron moore
Than myn owene auncer,[1]
Who so weyed truthe.
'I boughte hire barly-malt,
She brew it to selle,
Peny ale and puddyng ale
She poured togideres,
For laborers and for lowe folk
That lay by hymselve.
'The beste ale lay in my bour,
Or in my bed-chambre;
And who so bummed therof,
Boughte it therafter,
A galon for a grote,
God woot, no lesse!
And yet it cam in cuppe-mele,
This craft my wif used.
Rose the Regrater
Was hire righte name;
She hath holden hukkerye
Al hire lif tyme.
Ac I swere now, so thee ik!
That synne wol I lete,
And nevere wikkedly weye,
Ne wikke chaffare use;
But wenden to Walsyngham,
And my wif als,
And bidde the Roode of Bromholm
Brynge me out of dette.'
'Repentedestow evere?' quod Repentaunce,
'Or restitucion madest.'
'Yis[2], ones I was y-herberwed,' quod he,
'With an heep of chapmen,
I roos whan thei were a-reste
And riflede hire males.'

[1] *auncer*, here probably the bowl of a steelyard, or of a pair of scales; generally, a cup. [2] *yis*. This particle, being an answer to a question framed affirmatively, is wrongly used for *yea*. See First Series, Lecture XXVI., pp. 579, 583.

'That was no restitucion,' quod Repentaunce,
'But a robberis thefte;
Thow haddest be the bettre worthi
Ben hanged therfore,
Than for al that
That thow hast here shewed.'
'I wende riflynge were restitucion,' quod he,
'For I lerned nevere rede on boke;
And I kan no Frensshe, in feith,
But of the fertheste ende of Northfolk.'
'Usedestow evere usurie?' quod Repentaunce,
'In al thi lif tyme.'
'Nay sothly,' he seide,
'Save in my youthe
I lerned among Lumbardes
And Jewes a lesson,
To weye pens with a peis,[1]
And pare the hevyeste,
And lene it for love of the cros,
To legge a wed[2] and lese it.
Swiche dedes I dide write,
If he his day breke,
I have mo manoirs thorugh rerages,
Than thorugh *miseretur et commodat.*
'I have lent lordes
And ladies my chaffare,
And ben hire brocour after,
And bought it myselve;
Eschaunges and chevysaunces
With swich chaffare I dele,
And lene folk that lese wole
A lippe at every noble,
And with Lumbardes lettres[3]
I ladde gold to Rome,
And took it by tale here,
And tolde hem there lasse.'

[1] *peis*, Fr. poids, weight. [2] *wed*, pledge. [3] *Lumbardes lettres*, bills of exchange. There are some passages in this extract which I do not understand. I hope my readers may be more fortunate.

'Lentestow evere lordes,
For love of hire mayntenaunce?'
'Ye, I have lent to lordes,
Loved me nevere after,
And have y-maad many a knyght
Bothe mercer and draper,
That payed nevere for his prentishode
Noght a peire gloves.'
'Hastow pité on povere men,
That mote nedes borwe?'
'I have as muche pité of povere men,
As pedlere hath of cattes,
That wolde kille hem, if he cacche hem myghte,
For coveitise of hir skynnes.'
'Artow manlich among thi neghebores
Of thi mete and drynke?'
'I am holden,' quod he, 'as hende
As hound is in kichene,
Amonges my neghebores, namely,
Swiche a name ich have.'

The multitude of repentant hearers set out on a pilgrimage to Truth, under the leadership of a pilgrim who is thus described: —

Ac there was wight noon so wys
The wey thider kouthe,
But blustreden forth as beestes
Over bankes and hilles;
Til late was and longe
That thei a leode[1] mette,
Apparailled as a paynym
In pilgrymes wise.
He bar a burdoun[2] y-bounde
With a brood liste,
In a withwynde wise
Y-wounden aboute;
A bolle and a bagge
He bar by his syde,

[1] *leode*, man, person. [2] *burdoun*, staff.

And hundred of ampulles[1]
On his hat seten,
Signes of Synay,
And shelles of Galice,
And many a crouche[2] on his cloke,
And keyes of Rome,
And the vernycle bi-fore,
For men sholde knowe
And se bi hise signes
Whom he sought hadde.

It may be worth remarking, in connection with this description, which would in many particulars apply to the religious mendicants of the East at the present day, whether Moslem or Christian, that the different tokens enumerated indicated the different shrines or other sacred localities which the pilgrim had visited or professed to have visited. The 'shelle of Galice,' or cockle-shell, was the proper cognizance of those who had paid their vows at the shrine of St. James, at Compostella in Galicia, on the coast of which province the cockle-shell abounded; the palm and the cross were worn by those who had worshipped at the Holy Sepulchre; the keys of Peter, and the vernycle, or painting of the handkerchief of St. Veronica, on which the Saviour impressed his likeness, when he wiped the sweat from his brow with it on his way to Calvary, by those who had been at Rome.

The pilgrim, notwithstanding his experience as a traveller, and the sanctity with which his visits to so many sacred localities had invested him, proved a blind guide, and the wanderers put themselves under the direction of Piers the Ploughman, who now, for the first time, appears in the poem. The new guide employs them in productive labour, but they become seditious, and are at last reduced by the aid of Hunger, who subdues Waste, the leader of the revolt, and humbles his followers.

[1] *ampulles*, generally, small phials; here it seems to mean tokens. [2] *crouche*, cross; the modern *crutch* takes its name from its cross-like form.

The poet here alludes to the effects of a recent famine and plague, and sharply satirizes the luxury and extravagance of the wealthier classes. The 'pardons' or indulgences of the Pope are contemptuously treated, and the pilgrim goes in search of 'Do-well,' a personification of good works, the true nature of which is treated as a difficult question. Wit appears to him and describes the residence of Do-well, Do-better, and Do-best, delivering, at the same time, a rambling moral and religious lecture. For this he is reproved by his wife, Studie, evidently a strong-minded dame,

> That lene was of lere,
> And of liche bothe,[1]

who takes the words out of his mouth, and, after a long discourse, during which her husband, Wit,

> bicom so confus
> He kouthe noght loke,
> And as doumb as dethe,
> And drough him arere,

she recommends the Ploughman to her cousin Clergie, for further instruction. Clergie gives his pupil a dissertation, in which occurs what has been called a prophecy of the dissolution of the monasteries by Henry VIII.:—

> And thanne shal the abbot of Abyngdone,
> And al his issue for evere,
> Have a knok of a kyng,
> And incurable the wounde.

When Clergie concludes, the pilgrim exclaims:—

> This is a long lesson,
> And litel am I the wiser,

[1] *Lene of lere and of liche*, meagre in doctrine and in person. This is a sarcasm against scholastic theology, 'science falsely so called,' as opposed to practical, living Christianity.

proceeds to reply, at great length, and receives a reproof from Scripture, for his indocile temper. Then follows another vision, in which the dreamer is exposed to the temptations of fortune and sensual pleasure, is rescued by Old Age, and falls into a meditation on the covetousness of the friars, the doctrine of predestination and other religious topics. Nature now carries him to a mountain, and shows him how all living creatures, man alone excepted, are obedient to the dictates of Reason, after which follows an exhortation from Imaginative, concerning the divine punishments, the duties of charity and mercy, and the greater responsibilities of the learned and the rich.

Several sections of similar general character follow, in which new personifications of virtues, vices, and moral and intellectual qualities are introduced. In the eighteenth section, the character of Piers Ploughman is identified with that of the Saviour, and the remainder of this section is principally occupied with Christ's Passion, his descent into Hell, the rescue of the patriarchs and prophets, his resurrection and his final triumph over the infernal spirits. We have then the foundation of the visible Church, the opposition of worldly men and princes, and an attack of Antichrist on the Church. Afterwards, the Castle of Unity, the strong-hold of the Church, is assailed by an army of priests and monks, and Conscience, the governor of the castle, is driven out, and goes in quest of the Ploughman, when the dreamer awakes.

The movement of the poem is, to a considerable extent, dialogistic, and in these portions the dialect is evidently colloquial, though the characters are not sufficiently individualized to give the performance much of dramatic effect; but it seems extremely well calculated to influence the class for whose use it was chiefly intended, and the success it met with sufficiently proves that, in spite of its Latin quotations, it was, in the main, well suited to their comprehension.

Although, as I have before remarked, the proportion of words of foreign origin in the vocabulary of Piers Ploughman is as

great as in Chaucer, yet the structure of the dialect is more archaic, and there are many words which are now obsolete, as well as a considerable number the meaning of which is altogether unknown. But there is no such difference in the stock of words, or in the syntactical combinations of the two authors, as to create a marked dialectic distinction between them, and they are hardly more unlike than the style and diction of two English writers of the present day, who should treat themes and address audiences so different as those of Chaucer and Langlande.

The moods and tenses of the verb had acquired very nearly their present force, and the past and future auxiliaries were used substantially as in modern English. I mention this point particularly, because it has been said that the curious and intricate distinction we now make between the two auxiliaries, *shall* and *will*, is of recent origin. Cases may indeed be found in Piers Ploughman, where *shall* is used in a connection that would, in modern usage, require *will*, but these are few, and some of them doubtful; and I have observed no case where *will* is put for the modern *shall*.

The verbs are inflected much according to the Anglo-Saxon fashion, the ending *th* characterizing not only the third person singular, present indicative, but all the persons of the plural of that mood and tense, as well as the imperative. The infinitive generally ends in *en*, as does also the plural of the past tense, and both the weak and strong form of conjugation are employed. To all these rules there are exceptions, and the poet seems to have been influenced much by rhythm in the conjugation of his verbs.

The nouns, with few exceptions, form the plural in *s*, and the adjective plural usually terminates in *e*, but the declension of this part of speech is irregular.

The return to the Saxon conjugation of the verbs, which, as we have seen, had been much disturbed, is curious, as an exemplification of the reactionary tendency I have mentioned;

and the influence of Piers Ploughman, or of the spirit by which that work was animated, was strong enough to keep this revived inflection current until after the time of Chaucer.

There is, in general, much care and precision in the use of words, which seem often to be employed with an intelligent reference to their derivative history, and, in some instances, they are explained by a direct statement of their descent. The etymology of the word *heathen* from *heath*, as implying the rude and uncivilized inhabitants of wild and unreclaimed territory, is curious, and it has appeared as original in more than one later linguistic work. The whole passage is as follows: —

'Clooth that cometh fro the wevyng
Is noght comly to were,
Til it be fulled under foot
Or in fullyng stokkes,
Wasshen wel with water,
And with taseles cracched,
Y-touked[1] and y-teynted,[2]
And under taillours hande;
Right so it fareth by a barn,
That born is of a wombe,
Til it be cristned in Cristes name,
And confermed of the bisshope,
It is hethene as to hevene-ward,
And help-lees to the soule.
Hethen is to mene after heeth
And untiled erthe,
As in wilde wildernesse,
Wexeth wilde beestes,
Rude and unresonable,
Rennynge withouten cropiers.'

Piers Ploughman, although allegorical in its plan, and didactic in its aims, gives us more minute and intimate views of the material and social life of that age, than almost any poetical

[1] *y-touked*, dyed. [2] *y-teynted*, stretched on tenters.

work in early English literature. We have glimpses at the condition, and even the dress and nutriment, of the labouring classes, the processes of the arts, the frauds of artisans and dealers, the corruptions in the administration of justice, the relations between the clergy and the people, and, in short, at all those circumstances which made up the actualities of English life in the fourteenth century; and hence, though it deals with no questions of chronology, this poem is a contribution of some value to the domestic history of the English nation.

The following passages are of the character just indicated: —

quod Hunger,
'Hennes ne wole I wende,
Til I have dyned bi this day,
And y-dronke bothe.'
'I have no peny,' quod Piers,
'Pulettes to bugge,[1]
Ne neither gees ne grys,[2]
But two grene cheses,
A fewe cruddes and creme,
And an haver[3] cake,
And two loves of benes and bran,
Y-bake for my fauntes;[4]
And yet I seye, by my soule!
I have no salt bacon,
Ne no cokeney,[5] by Crist!
Coloppes for to maken.
'Ac I have percile and porettes
And manye cole plauntes,
And ek a cow and a calf,
And a cart mare
To drawe a-feld my donge,
The while the droghte lasteth;
And by this liflode we mote lyve
Til Lammesse tyme.
And by that, I hope to have
Hervest in my crofte,

[1] *bugge*, buy. [2] *grys*, pigs. [3] *haver*, oatmeal. [4] *fauntes*, servants.
[5] *cokeney*, Wright thinks, a lean fowl.

And thanne may I dighte thi dyner,
As me deere liketh.'
  Al the povere peple tho
Pescoddes fetten,
Benes and baken apples
Thei broghte in hir lappes,
Chibolles and chervelles,
And ripe chiries manye,
And profrede Piers this present
To plese with Hunger.
  Al Hunger eet in haste,
And axed after moore.
Thanne povere folk, for fere,
Fedden Hunger yerne,
With grene porret and pesen
To poisone hym thei thoghte.
By that it neghed neer hervest,
And newe corn cam to chepyng;[1]
Thanne was folk fayn,
And fedde Hunger with the beste,
With goode ale, as Gloton taghte,
And garte Hunger go slepe.
  And tho wolde Wastour noght werche,
But wandren aboute,
Ne no beggere ete breed
That benes inne were,
But of coket and cler-matyn,[2]
Or ellis of clene whete;
Ne noon halfpeny ale
In none wise drynke,
But of the beste and of the brunneste[3]
That in burghe is to selle.
  Laborers that have no land
To lyve on but hire handes,
Deyned noght to dyne a day
Nyght-olde wortes;
May no peny ale hem paye,
Ne no pece of bacone,

[1] *chepyng*, market. [2] *coket* and *cler-matyn*, finer kinds of bread. [3] *brunneste*, brownest, richest with malt.

But if it be fresshe flessh outher fisshe,
Fryed outher y-bake,
And that *chaud* and *plus chaud*,
For chillynge of hir mawe.

Verses 4357—4424.

Nought to fare as a fithelere or a frere,
For to seke festes
Homliche at othere mennes houses,
And hatien hir owene.
Elenge[1] is the halle
Ech day in the wike,
Ther the lord ne the lady
Liketh noght to sitte.
Now hath ech riche a rule
To eten by hymselve
In a pryvee parlour,
For povere mennes sake,
Or in a chambre with a chymenee,
And leve the chief halle
That was maad for meles,
Men to eten inne,
And al to spare to spende
That spille shal another.

Verses 5791—5808.

Thanne Pacience perceyved
Of pointes of this cote,
That were colomy[2] thorugh coveitise
And unkynde desiryng;
Moore to good than to God
The gome[3] his love caste,
And ymagynede how
He it myghte have
With false mesures and met,[4]
And with fals witnesse;
Lened[5] for love of the wed,[6]
And looth to do truthe;

[1] *elenge*, sad, melancholy, modern *ailing*. [2] *colomy*, meaning unknown. [3] *gome*, man. [4] *met*, measuring. [5] *lened*, lent. [6] *wed*, pledge.

And awaited thorugh which
Wey to bigile,
And menged[1] his marchaundise,
And made a good moustre;[2]
'The worste withinne was,
A greet wit I let it,
And if my neghebore hadde any hyne,[3]
Or any beest ellis,
Moore profitable than myn,
Manye sleightes I made
How I myghte have it,
Al my wit I caste.
And but I it hadde by oother wey,
At the laste I stale it;
Or priveliche his purs shook,
And unpikede hise lokes;
Or by nyghte or by daye
Aboute was ich evere,
Thorugh gile to gaderen
The good that ich have.
'If I yede to the plowgh,
I pynched so narwe,
That a foot lond or a forow
Fecchen I wolde
Of my nexte neghebore,
And nymen of his erthe.
And if I repe, over-reche,
Of yaf hem reed[4] that ropen[5]
To seise to me with hir sikel
That I ne sew[6] nevere.
'And who so borwed of me,
A-boughte the tyme
With presentes prively,
Or paide som certeyn;
So he wolde or noght wolde,
Wynnen I wolde,
And bothe to kith and to kyn
Unkynde of that ich hadde.

[1] *menged*, mixed, bad with good. [2] *moustre*, sample, or perhaps show, cunning arrangement so as to hide defects. [3] *hyne*, servant. [4] *reed*, directions. [5] *ropen*, reaped. [6] *sew*, sowed.

'And who so cheped my chaffare,
Chiden I wolde,
But he profrede to paie
A peny or tweyne
Moore than it was worth;
And yet wolde I swere
That it coste me muche moore,
And so swoor manye othes.'

Verses 8737—8795.

Barons and burgeises,
And bonde-men als,
I seigh in this assemblee,
As ye shul here after:
Baksteres and brewesteres,
And bochiers manye;
Wollen webbesters,
And weveres of lynnen,
Taillours and tynkers,
And tollers in markettes,
Masons and mynours,
And many othere craftes.
Of alle kynne lybbynge laborers
Lopen[1] forth somme,
As dikeres and delveres,
That doon hire dedes ille,
That dryveth forth the longe day
With *Dieu save dame Emme.*
Cokes and hire knaves
Cryden 'Hote pies, hote!
Goode gees and grys!
Gowe, dyne, gowe!'
Taverners until hem
Trewely tolden the same,
Whit wyn of Oseye,
And reed wyn of Gascoigne,
Of the Ryn and of the Rochel,
The roost to defie.[2]

Verses 430—457.

[1] *lopen*, ran. [2] *defie*, digest.

Langlande seems to have shared in the popular prejudice under which the profession of law has always laboured. He thus satirizes the bar:—

Yet hoved[1] ther an hundred
In howves[2] of selk,
Sergeantz it bi-semed
That serveden at the barre,
Pleteden for penyes
And poundes the lawe;
And noght for love of our Lord
Unlose hire lippes ones.
Thow myghtest bettre meete myst
On Malverne hilles,
Than gete a mom of hire mouth,
Til moneie be shewed.

Verses 418—429.

In the third passus, Mede's confessor proposes to her to secure her salvation by giving his church a painted window, to which she assents:—

Thanne he assoiled hire soone,
And sithen he seide:
'We have a wyndow in werchynge
Wole sitten us ful hye,
Woldestow glaze that gable
And grave therinne thy name,
Syker sholde thi soule be
Hevene to have.'

Verses 1449—1456.

'Have mercy,' quod Mede,
'Of men that it haunteth,
And I shal covere youre kirk,
Youre cloistre do maken,
Wowes[3] do whiten,
And wyndowes glazen,

[1] *hoved*, waited. [2] *howves*, hoods or caps. [3] *Wowes*, walls.

Do peynten and portraye,
And paie for the makynge,
That every segge[1] shal seye
I am suster of youre house.'

Upon this the Pilgrim observes:—

Ac God to alle good folk
Swich gravynge defendeth,
To writen in wyndowes
Of hir wel dedes.
* * * *
Lat noght thi left half
Late ne rathe
Wite what thow werchest
With thi right syde;
For thus by the gospel
Goode men doon hir almesse.

Verses 1483—1507.

The author exhibits a liberality towards the Jews rarely met with in that age:—

Sholde no cristene creature
Cryen at the yate,
Ne faille payn ne potage,
And prelates dide as thei sholden.
A Jew wolde noght se a Jew
Go janglyng for defaute,
For alle the mebles on this moolde,
And he amende it myghte.
Allas! that a cristene creature
Shal be unkynde til another;
Syn Jewes, that we jugge
Judas felawes,
Eyther of hem helpeth oother
Of that that hem nedeth.
Whi nel we cristene
Of Cristes good be as kynde
As Jewes, that ben oure lores-men.

Verses 5318—5337.

[1] *segge*, man.

The following passage on the degeneracy of both nature and man is striking:—

'And so it fareth by som folk now,
Thei han a fair speche,
Crowne and cristendom,
The kynges mark of hevene;
Ac the metal, that is mannes soule,
With synne is foule alayed.
Bothe lettred and lewed
Beth alayed now with synne,
That no lif loveth oother
Ne oure Lord, as it semeth.
For thorugh werre and wikkede werkes,
And wederes unresonable,
Weder-wise shipmen,
And witty clerkes also,
Han no bileve to the lifte,[1]
Ne to the loore of philosofres.
'Astronomiens al day
In hir art faillen,
That whilom warned bifore
What sholde falle after.
'Shipmen and shepherdes,
That with ship and sheep wenten,
Wisten by the walkne[2]
What sholde bitide,
As of wedres and wyndes
Thei warned men ofte.
'Tilieris, that tiled the erthe,
Tolden hir maistres,
By the seed that thei sewe,
What thei selle myghte,
And what to lene, and what to lyve by,
The lond was so trewe.
'Now faileth the folk of the flood,
And of the lond bothe,
Shepherdes and shipmen,
And so do thise tilieris,

[1] *lifte*, sky, signs of weather. [2] *walkne*, clouds, *welkin*.

Neither thei konneth ne knoweth
Oon cours bifore another.
'Astronomyens also
Aren at hir wittes ende,
Of that was calculed of the element
The contrarie thei fynde;
Grammer, the ground of al,
Bigileth now children,
For is noon of this newe clerkes,
Who so nymeth hede,
Naught oon among an hundred
That an auctour kan construwe,
Ne rede a lettre in any langage
But in Latin or in Englissh.'

Verses 10,326—10,375.

Also the following:—

For Sarzens han somwhat
Semynge to oure bileve;
For thei love and bileve
In o persone almyghty;
And we, lered and lewed,
In oon God almyghty;
And oon Makometh, a man,
In mysbileve broughte
Sarzens of Surree,
And see in what manere.
'This Makometh was a cristene
And for he moste noght ben a pope
Into Surrie he soughte,
And thorugh hise sotile wittes
He daunted[1] a dowve,
And day and nyght hire fedde,
The corn that she croppede
He caste it in his ere;
And if he among the peple preched,
Or in places come,
Thanne wolde the colvere[2] come
To the clerkes ere

[1] *daunted*, tamed. [2] *colvere*, dove.

Menynge as after mete,—
Thus Makometh hire enchauntede;
And dide folk thanne falle on knees,
For he swoor in his prechyng
That the colvere that com so,
Com from God of hevene,
As messager to Makometh,
Men for to teche.
And thus thorugh wiles of his wit,
And a whit dowve,
Makometh in mysbileve
Men and wommen broughte;
That lyved tho there and lyve yit
Leeven[1] on hise lawes.
'And siththe our Saveour suffred,
The Sarzens so bigiled
Thorugh a cristene clerk,
Acorsed in his soule!
For drede of the deeth
I dare noght telle truthe,
How Englisshe clerkes a colvere fede
That coveitise hightе,
And ben manered after Makometh,
That no man useth trouthe.'

Verses 10,408—10,453.

I have dwelt the longer upon the Vision of Piers Ploughman, because I think justice has never been done to its great merits —which can be appreciated only by careful study—and to its importance in the literary history of England. Although Wright has rendered an excellent service by making this poem accessible, and in the main intelligible, to common readers, much labour ought still to be bestowed upon it. A scrupulously literal reproduction of the best manuscripts, with various readings from all the copies, is needed; and few old English authors better deserve, or will better repay the careful attention of English scholarship.

The Creed of Piers Ploughman, which appeared, as is supposed,

[1] *leeven*, believe.

twenty or thirty years after the Vision, may or may not be a work of the same author. The style and diction are much the same, but the later work is more exclusively theological, and graver in tone, and it shows an advance upon the opinions of the earlier poem, harmonizing more unequivocally with the views of Wycliffe and the Reformers of his school, but it does not seem to have ever obtained the wide currency and influence of its predecessor.

The general character of this work will sufficiently appear from these passages:—

Than thought I to frayne[1] the first
Of this foure ordres;
And presed to the Prechoures,
To proven her wille.
Ich highed to her house,
To herken of more;
And when I came to that court,
I gaped aboute,
Swich a bild[2] bold
Y-buld upon erthe heighte
Say I nought in certeyn
Syththe a long tyme.
I semed opon that hous,
And yerne theron loked,
Whow the pileres weren y-paint,
And pulchud[3] ful clene,
And queyntly y-corven
With curious knottes;
With wyndowes wel y-wrought,
Wyde up a-lofte,
And thanne I entred in,
And even forth wente;
And al was walled that wone,
Though it wiid were,
With posternes in privité
To pasen when hem liste;
Orcheyardes and erberes

[1] *frayne*, inquire of. [2] *bild*, building. [3] *pulchud*, polished.

Evesed[1] wel clene,
And a curious cros
Craftly entayled,
With tabernacles y-tight[2]
To toten[3] al abouten.
The pris of a plough-lond
Of penies so rounde
To aparaile that pyler
Were pure litel.
Than I munte[4] me forth
The mynstre to knowen,
And awaytede a woon[5]
Wonderly wel y-bild,
With arches on everiche half,
And bellyche y-corven,
With crochetes on corneres,
With knottes of gold,
Wyde wyndowes y-wrought,
Y-wryten ful thikke,
Shynen with shapen sheldes,
To shewen aboute,
With merkes of merchauntes
Y-medeled betwene,
Mo than twentie and two
Twyse y-noumbbred.
Ther is non heraud that hath
Half swich a rolle,
Right as a rageman
Hath rekned hem newe.
Tombes upon tabernacles
Tylde opon lofte,
Housed in hornes,
Harde set abouten,
Of armede alabaustre
Clad for the nones,

[1] *evesed*, should mean provided with eave-troughs, perhaps, here, sheltered with arbours, roofs, or awnings. [2] *y-tight*, furnished. [3] *tabernacles . . . . toten; toten* is to look, and the phrase means *belvederes*, look-out towers. [4] *munte*, from *minnen*, to be minded, to incline. [5] *awaytede a woon*, observed a dwelling or house.

Maad opon marbel
In many manner wyse,
Knyghtes in ther conisante
Clad for the nones;
Alle it semed seyntes
Y-sacred opon erthe;
And lovely ladies y-wrought
Leyen by her sydes
In manye gay garnemens,
That weren gold beten.
Though the tax of ten yere
Were trewely y-gadered,
Nolde it nought maken that hous
Half, as I trowe.
Than cam I to that cloystre,
And gaped abouten,
Whough it was pilered and peynt,
And portreyed wel clene,
Al y-hyled with leed
Lowe to the stones,
And y-paved with poynttyl
Ich point after other;
With cundites of clene tyn
Closed al aboute,
With lavoures of latun
Loveliche y-greithed.
I trowe the gaynage of the ground
In a gret shyre
Nold aparaile that place
Oo poynt tyl other ende.
Thanne was that chapitre house
Wrought as a greet chirche,
Corven and covered,
And queyntelyche entayled,
With semliche selure[1]
Y-seet on lofte,
As a parlement-hous
Y-peynted aboute.
Thanne ferd I into fraytoure,

[1] *selure*, ceiling.

And fond there another,
An halle for an hygh kynge
An houshold to holden,
With brode bordes abouten
Y-benched wel clene,
With wyndowes of glaas
Wrought as a chirche
Than walkede I ferrer,
And went al abouten,
And seigh halles full heygh,
And houses ful noble,
Chambres with chymeneys,
And chapeles gaye,
And kychenes for an high kynge
In casteles to holden;
And her dortoure y-dight
With dores ful stronge;
Fermerye and fraitur,[1]
With fele mo houses,
And al strong ston wal
Sterne upon heithe,
With gaye garites[2] and grete,
And iche hole y-glased,
And other houses y-nowe
To herberwe the queene.
And yet thise bilderes wiln beggen
A bagge ful of whete
Of a pure pore man,
That may onethe paye
Half his rent in a yere,
And half ben byhynde.
Than turned I ayen,
Whan I hadde all y-toted,
And fond in a freitoure
A frere on a benche,
A greet chorl and a grym,
Growen as a tonne,
With a face so fat

[1] *fraitur*, refectory. [2] *garites*, perhaps garrets, but I think more probably turrets, or pinnacles.

As a ful bleddere
Blowen bretful of breth,
And as a bagge honged
On bothen his chekes, and his chyn
With a chol lollede
So greet as a gos ey,
Growen al of grece;
That al wagged his fleish
As a quick myre.
His cope, that bi-clypped hym,
Wel clene was it folden,
Of double worstede y-dyght
Doun to the hele.
His kyrtel of clene whiit,
Clenlyche y-sewed,
Hit was good y-now of ground
Greyn for to beren.
I haylsede[1] that hirdman,
And hendlich I sayde,
'Gode sire, for Godes love!
Canstou me graith tellen
To any worthely wiight
That wissen me couthe,
Whow I shulde conne my Crede,
Christ for to folwe,
That levede[2] lelliche[3] hymselfe
And lyvede therafter,
That feynede no falshede,
But fully Christ suwede?
For sich a certeyn man
Syker wold I trosten,
That he wolde telle me the trewthe,
And turne to non other.
And an Austyn[4] this ender day
Egged me faste;
That he wolde techen we wel,
He plyght me his treuthe,
And seyde me 'certeyn,

[1] *haylsede*, saluted. [2] *levede*, believed. [3] *lelliche*, loyally, lawfully.
[4] *Austyn*, Augustine friar.

Syghthen Christ deyed
Oure ordre was euelles
And erst y-founde.'
'First, felawe,' quath he,
'Fy on his pilche![1]
He is but abortiif,
Eked with cloutes,
He holdeth his ordynaunce
With hores and theves,
And purchaseth hem pryvyleges
With penyes so rounde.
It is a pur pardoners craft,
Prove and asay;
For have they thy money,
A moneth therafter
Certes, theigh thou come agen,
He wil the nought knowen.
But, felawe, oure foundement
Was first of the othere,
And we ben founded fulliche
Withouten fayntise,
And we ben clerkes y-cnowen,
Cunnyng in schole,
Proved in processyon
By processe of lawe.
Of oure order ther beth
Bichopes wel manye,
Seyntes on sundri stedes
That suffreden harde;
And we ben proved the priis
Of popes at Rome,
And of grettest degré
As godspelles telleth.'

Lines 303—512.

The Pilgrim, who had already consulted a Minorite, visits, in turn, the two remaining orders: the Austyns or Augustins and the Carmelites, who abuse the 'Prechours' and the 'Minours' as heartily as they had been censured by them. He then falls

[1] *pilche*, fur, or long napped cloth, cloak.

in with Piers Ploughman, who exposes the corruptions of monastic life, and dismisses the Pilgrim after having taught him a Creed substantially conforming to that called 'the Apostles'.'

Another poem of similar metrical structure, but of exclusively political character, is the alliterative allegory on the abuses of the reign of Richard II., and his intended deposition. This is an imitation of the style and manner of Piers Ploughman, and is not without point and spirit. The dialect remains the same, substantially, though, while the vocabulary is more modern, the grammar is, in some respects, more archaic. It is a matter of some interest to observe that it contains many nautical phrases, used with a familiarity quite new to English literature, and which shows that the increasing navigation and foreign commerce of England were beginning to exert an appreciable influence on the dialect of books as well as of ordinary speech.

The passage into which most of these phrases are introduced is, for the period, almost unique in its character, and as several of the technical terms employed in it here occur, for the first time, in English, it may be worth citing, though perhaps not clearly intelligible to mere landsmen :—*

and somme were so ffers
at the ffrist come,
that they bente on a bonet,
and bare a topte saile
affor the wynde ffresshely,

* In the Glossarial Remarks and Emendations, Layamon III. 476, Sir F. Madden quotes these lines from a manuscript which has never been printed : —

Then he tron on tho trees, and thay her tramme reechen;
Cachen vp the crossayl, cables thay casten;
Wiȝt at the wyndas weren her ankres,
Sprude spak to the sprete, the spare bawe-lyne;
Gederen to the gyde-ropes, the grete cloth falles;
Thay layden in on ladde borde, and the lofe wynnes;
The blythe brethe at her bak, the bosum he fyndes;
He swenges me thys swete schip swefte fro the hauen.

Is *ladde borde* the primitive form of *larboard?* If so, it is a step towards the etymology of that obscure word.

to make a good ffare.
Than lay the lordis alee
with laste and with charge,
and bare abouȝte the barge,
and blamed the maister,
that knewe not the kynde cours
that to the crafte longid,
and warned him wisely
of the wedir side.
Thanne the maste in the myddis,
at the monthe ende,
bowid ffor brestynge,
and brouȝte hem to lond;
ffor ne had thei striked a strake,
and sterid hem the better,
and abated a bonet,
or the blast come,
they had be throwe overe the borde,
backewarde ichonne.

The volume of Political Poems and Songs from which the above lines are taken contains an irregularly alliterative poem, in eight-lined stanzas, called the Complaint of the Ploughman. This was formerly ascribed to Chaucer, and exists in no earlier form than in printed editions of the fifteenth century, although it probably belongs, as originally written, to the reign of Richard II. It is a satire on the abuses of Church and State, but is worthy neither of the name it claims nor of the author to whom it has been attributed.

I am not acquainted with any poem resembling Piers Ploughman in poetic form, of later date than the fourteenth century, which is worthy of notice, though there were several attempts at imitation of this rhythm and metre in subsequent ages.

I have already adverted to the remarkable circumstance, that, though many political songs and satires of the preceding century, of a popular cast, were in English, a large proportion of the most important poems of this class in the reign of Edward III. were in French or in Latin.

This may probably be explained by the fact, that many of them relate to events or measures of policy, the connection of which with the material well-being of the commonalty was not very obvious, and which therefore did not much excite the interest of the English-speaking people, but appealed rather to the passions, the opinions, the principles of the governing classes, who were generally, no doubt, better instructed in written French and Latin than in the native tongue.

These classes, indeed, at the period we are now treating of, certainly *spoke* English habitually, but they had not cultivated it as a governmental or official organ of communication, and it was therefore essentially unfit for the discussion of political subjects. Such topics found much better vehicles in Latin and in French, which latter tongue, as we have seen, had gradually been trained up to a power of expression that had enabled it to compete with Latin as a learned and universal speech.

Froissart, in describing his presentation of a volume of his poems to Richard II., observes, as a noteworthy circumstance, that the King 'loked in it and reed yt in many places, for he coulde speke and rede French very well;' and in the same paragraph he mentions Henry Castyde, an English squire, as an 'honest man and a wyse, and coud well speke Frenche.'* But the same chronicler informs us that the negotiations for the peace of 1393 were conducted in French, and that the English commissioners were much embarrassed by their want of a knowledge of the niceties and subtleties of that language.

* 'Than the kynge desyred to se my booke that I had brought for hym; so he sawe it in his chambre, for I had layde it there redy on his bedde. Whanne the kynge opened it, it pleased hym well, for it was fayre enlumyned and written, and couered with crymson veluet, with ten botons of sylucr and gylte, and roses of golde in the myddes, wyth two great clapses gylte, rychely wroughte. Than the kyng demaunded me whereof it treated, and I shewed hym how it treated maters of loue; wherof the kynge was gladde and loked in it, and reed yt in many places, for he coulde speke and rede French very well; and he tooke yt to a knyght of hys chambre, named Syr Richarde Creadon, to beare it into hys secrete chambre.'—Lord Berners's Froissart, chap. cxcviii. Reprint of 1812, vol. II., chap. ccii. p. 619.

'The englysshemen,' says he, 'had moche payne to here and to vnderstande the frenchemen, who were full of subtyle wordes, and cloked perswacions and double of vnderstandynge, the whiche the frenchemen wolde tourne as they lyst to their profyte and aduauntage, whiche englysshemen vse nat in their langage, for their speche and entent is playne; and also the englisshmen were enfourmed that the Frenchemen had nat alwayes vpholden the artycles, promyses and condycyons, ratyfied in the artycles of peace; yet the frenchmen wolde ever fynde one poynte or other in their writynges, by some subtyle cloked worde, affermynge that the englysshemen had broken the peace, and nat they; wherfore whan the englysshemen sawe or herde in the frenchemens writynges any darke or cloked worde, they made it to be examyned by such as were profoundly lerned in the lawe, and if they founde it amysse, they caused it to be canselled and amended, to the entent they wolde leaue nothynge in trouble; and the englysshmen, to excuse themselfe, wolde say, that frenchemen lernynge such subtylties in their youth muste nedes be more subtyle than they.'*

The poems which we have now been considering, and others of minor importance, though of kindred spirit, contributed their share to the extension of the English vocabulary, to the flexibility of the syntax, and to the various culture of the English people, and thus prepared the speech and the nation for the reception of the controversial writings and the scriptural versions of the Wycliffite school, the influence of which on the language and literature of England will be examined in the next lecture.

NOTE ON THE ITALIAN DIALECTS.

It is difficult for Englishmen and Anglo-Americans, who habitually speak much as they write, and write much as they speak, to conceive of the co-existence of two dialects in a people, one almost uniformly employed in conversation, the other almost as exclusively in writing. Yet such was the state of things in England, from the Conquest at least to the middle of the fourteenth century, and such is the case in a large part of Europe at this day. In Italy, for instance, there is almost everywhere a popular speech, commonly employed by all classes

* Lord Berners's Froissart, chap. cxcv., reprint of 1812, vol. ii. pp. 599, 600. See note on Italian dialects at the end of this lecture.

in familiar oral intercourse, and so far cultivated that it can be, though it rarely is, written, while, at the same time, the lingua comune d'Italia, or, as it is often called, the Tuscan dialect, is known to all, as the language of books, of journals, and of correspondence, and is also employed as the medium of religious and scholastic instruction. But this literary tongue, at least in those parts of Italy where dialects widely different from it are habitually spoken, always remains to the Italians themselves essentially a foreign language. This fact Biondelli states in stronger terms than a prudent stranger would venture to do upon the testimony of his own observation. 'Tanto è vero che, per parlare e scrivere italianamente, dobbiamo imparare questa nostra lingua con lunghi e laboriosi studj, poco meno che se apprendessimo la latina o la francese; e a malgrado dell' affinità sua coi nostri dialetti e del continuo leggere, scrivere e parlare l' italiano, ben pochi giungono a trattarlo come conviensi, e grandi e frequenti sono le difficultà che incontriamo ogniqualvolta vogliamo esporre con chiarezza e proprietà le nostre idee, poichè veramente dobbiamo tradurre il nostro dialetto in altra lingua, vale a dire, rappresentare sotto diversa forma i nostri pensieri.'—*Biondelli, Saggio sui Dialetti Gallo-Italici*, x.

There is a similar discrepancy between the written and spoken language in many parts of Germany, though the diffusion of literary culture in that country has made the dialect of books more universally familiar than in most European nations. The traveller Seetzen, whose journals have lately been published, sometimes makes entries in them in the Platt-Deutsch of his native province, and states expressly that he uses that dialect in order that those passages may not be understood by strangers into whose hands his papers might chance to fall.

LECTURE VIII.

WYCLIFFE AND HIS SCHOOL.

We come now to a period when far other necessities than those of imaginative literature, of mechanical or decorative art, or of any interest of material life, demanded the formation of a new special nomenclature—a nomenclature and a phraseology, which, though first employed in a limited range of themes and discussions, yet, from the intimate relation of those themes to all the higher aspirations of humanity, gradually acquired more extended significance and more varied applications, and finally became, in great part, incorporated into the general speech as a new enlivening and informing element.

I refer to the theological vocabulary of Wycliffe and his disciples, which, in a considerable proportion indeed, was composed of words already familiar to the clergy and the better instructed laity, but which those reformers popularized, and at the same time enlarged and modified, by new terms coined or borrowed for use in their translations of the Scriptures, and by imposing on already known words new, or at least special acceptations.

The Anglo-Saxons possessed a vernacular translation of the Gospels, and of some other parts of the Bible; and several more or less complete versions of the Scriptures existed in French as early as the twelfth century. But there is no reason to believe that any considerable portion of the Bible, except the Psalter, had ever been rendered into English, until the translation of the whole volume was undertaken, at the suggestion of Wycliffe, and in part by his own efforts, a little before the

beginning of the last quarter of the fourteenth century. English preachers, it is true, had always freely introduced into their sermons quotations from the vulgate, translated for the occasion by themselves, and thus the people had already become somewhat familiarized with the contents of the Old and New Testament; but these sermons were rarely copied for circulation, or probably even written down at all, and therefore no opportunity existed for the study or consultation of the Bible as an English book.*

The English nation, for reasons stated in a former lecture, had always been practically more independent of the papacy than the Continental states. The schism in the church, with the long struggle between the claimants to the chair of Peter—each of whom denounced his rival as an anti-pope, and excommunicated his followers as heretics—naturally much weakened the authority of both the contending parties. Men were not only at liberty, but found themselves compelled, to inquire which was the true head of the church, and they could not investigate the title of the respective claimants to ecclesiastical supremacy, without being very naturally led to doubt whether either

* The translations of the texts cited by Wycliffe himself, in the controversial works most confidently ascribed to him, by no means agree literally with the version of the New Testament, and of a part of the Old, which he is believed to have executed. See Introduction to Madden and Forshall's edition of the Wycliffite Translations. Comparisons of this sort have often been appealed to as a test of the authenticity of writings attributed to his pen. But they seem to me to be entitled to very little weight. Wycliffe wrote much before he made his translation, and his later works must often have been written when he could not have had that translation with him. The 'pore caityf,' as he humbly calls himself, certainly did not regard his own version with the reverence with which we view it; and a good biblical scholar like him, finding a Latin scriptural text in an author he was refuting, or having occasion to use one which occurred to him, would, in the fervour of composition, write down the translation which, at the moment, presented itself, and which the argument in hand suggested as the truest expression of the meaning.

Few authors are vain enough to be disposed to quote or repeat their own words, or even the words of another which they have made their own by translation, and I think a writer of the present day would sooner re-translate a passage from an ancient author he wished to quote, than unshelf a volume, and copy a citation which he had translated on a former occasion. A discrepancy, therefore, between a text quoted by Wycliffe and his own formal translation of it elsewhere, affords no presumption against the authenticity of a manuscript attributed to him.

of them was better than a usurper. The decision of the immediate question between the rival pontiffs turned, in the end, more on political than on canonical grounds*; but while it was under discussion, the whole doctrine of papal supremacy underwent a sifting, that revealed to thousands the sandy nature of the foundation on which it rested. A result more important than the particular conclusions arrived at, as between the claims of Urban and Clement, was, that the controversy taught and habituated thinking ecclesiastics, and, by their example, the laity, to exercise their reason upon topics which had before been generally considered as points which it was blasphemous even to debate.

The habit of unquestioning submission to the decrees of a church which arrogated to itself infallibility of opinion, and binding authority of judgment, upon religious questions whose

* Capgrave gives us a specimen of the arguments — *rationes regum*, or rather, *ad reges* — employed by Pope and Anti-Pope with the sovereigns of their respective parties.

'Also he notified onto the Kyng [Richard II.], that the Antipope and the Kyng of Frauns be thus accordid, that the seid Kyng of Frauns, with help of the duke of Burgony, and othir, schul set the Antipope in the sete at Rome; and the same Antipope schal make the Kyng of Frauns emperoure, and othir dukes he schal endewe in the lordchippis of Itaile. Also, he enformed the King what perel schuld falle if the Antipope and the Kyng were thus acorded, and the Kyng of Frauns emperoure, — he schuld be that wey chalenge the dominion of Ynglond. Therefor the Pope counceleth the King, that he schal make no pes with the Kyng of Frauns but on this condicion, that the King of Frauns schal favoure the opinion of the trewe Pope, and suffir non of his puple to fite ageyn him.'— *Capgrave*, A.D. 1390, pp. 255, 256.

It should be added that, on the same occasion, the Pope asked in vain for the repeal of the famous statutes, *Quare impedit* and *Premuniri facias*, so important to the liberties of England.

'The Pope merveyled mech of certeyn statutes which were mad in this lond ageyn the liberte of the cherch; and for the Pope supposed that it was not the Kyngis wil, therefor he sent his messagere to stere the Kyng that swech statutes schuld be abrogat whech be ageyn the liberte of Holy Cherch, specially these two, "Quare impedit" and "Premunire facias."'

The moment was ill chosen for asking a concession, which, under almost any circumstances, would have been too much for the sturdy independence of England; and though the request was enforced by the hint above mentioned, the chronicler informs us that, 'as for promociones of hem that dwelled at Rome, it wold not be graunted; but, for favoure of the Pope, thei graunted him his provysiones *til the nexte Parlement*.'—*Capgrave, ubi supra.*

comprehension demands the exercise of man's highest faculties, had naturally begotten a spirit of deference to the dicta of great names in secular learning also. This deference characterized the mass of the original literature of the Continent through the Middle Ages; and in discussions upon questions of natural knowledge, of history, of criticism, the opinions of eminent writers were commonly cited, not as arguments, or even as the testimony of competent witnesses to facts of observation, but as binding conclusions, scarcely less irrefragable or less sacred than the inspired infallibility of a pontiff. Habitual submission to the jurisdiction of secular names, as, for example, to the opinions of Aristotle in physics and metaphysics, was politicly encouraged and inculcated by the church, not merely because particular metaphysico-theological dogmas of Rome found support in the Aristotelian philosophy, but because such submission was a practical recognition of the principle of authority in all moral and intellectual things. Just so, in the public policy of our times, the governing classes, in some states liberal in their own domestic administration, sustain the usurped dominion of certain dynasties over foreign territory, not because they believe the right or approve the oppressions of those dynasties, but because their rule is an embodiment of the aristocratic principle in government, and is therefore the representative and ally of aristocracy everywhere.

The shock given to the dominion of the papal see, by the schism and the discussions occasioned by that event, did much to weaken the authority of human names in letters and in philosophy; and it happened at a very favourable juncture for English literature, which thus, at its very birth, acquired an independence, and consequently an originality, that a half-century earlier or later it would not have attained.

The literature which belongs to the civilization of modern Europe is essentially Protestant, because it almost uniformly originated, if not in a formal revolt against the power of physical coercion exerted by the church, at least in a protest against the morally-binding obligation of her decrees, and its earliest

expression was a denunciation of those abuses which had converted her, from a nursing mother of the best and holiest affections of the heart, into a worldly, ambitious, self-seeking, rapacious, and oppressive organization. It is only when men are emancipated from humiliating spiritual servitude, that the intellect can be set free; and the training, which the unobstructed investigation and discussion of theological doctrine involves, is the most powerful of all methods of intellectual culture.

The Wycliffite translations were made from the Latin of the vulgate.* There is not much reason to suppose that any of the persons engaged in this work knew enough of Greek, still less of Hebrew, to translate directly from those languages; and consequently the new syntactical combinations they introduced are all according to the Latin idiom, except in so far as the dialect of the vulgate itself had been modified by the influence of the Greek and Hebrew texts on which it was founded. But the translators often resorted to commentators for explanation, and thus sometimes became acquainted with Hebraisms at second hand; and the latest revision of the version, that of Purvey, is by no means a slavish copy of the literal sense of the vulgate, while it weeded out, without scruple, a large proportion of the Latinisms which the first translators had introduced into their renderings from an anxious desire for strict conformity to a text recognized by the church as of equal authority with the sacred original itself.

I cannot go into a history of these versions on the present occasion, or examine the evidence on the question: how far John Wycliffe was personally concerned in the execution of them. It must suffice to say that in the only entirely trustworthy edition we possess of any of them — the liber verè aureus,

* By *vulgate*, I here mean the Latin translation adopted by the church and ascribed to Jerome, so far as the manuscripts then in circulation could be identified with it. But the copies of the Scriptures, as of secular works, were often widely discrepant, even when professedly transcribed from the same original — a circumstance which explains how the 'symple creature,' mentioned in a passage quoted at length in a subsequent part of this lecture, 'hadde myche trauaile' 'to make oo Latyn bible sumdel trewe.'

the golden book, of Old-English philology — that, namely, published at Oxford in 1850, in four quarto volumes, under the editorship of Forshall and Madden, the older text, from Genesis to Baruch iii. 20, is believed to be the work of Hereford, an English ecclesiastic;* the remainder of the Old Testament and Apocrypha is supposed, and the whole of the New Testament almost certainly known, to have been translated by Wycliffe; while the later text of the entire Bible is ascribed to Purvey. The precise periods of the beginning and ending of a work, which must have occupied many years in its execution, have not been ascertained, but we have reason to think that the older text was completed about 1380, the revision by Purvey some eight or ten years later, or a little before 1390.

These translations must, in spite of the great cost of copying them, have been very widely circulated; for old manuscripts of them are still very numerous, although we know that, for a century and a half after the work was done, unwearied pains were taken by the Romish ecclesiastical authorities to secure the destruction of every trace of this heretical version.

It is a noteworthy circumstance in the history of the literature of Protestant countries, that, in every one of them, the creation or revival of a national literature has commenced with, or at least been announced by, a translation of the Scriptures into the vernacular, which has been remarkable both as an accurate representative of the original text, and as an exhibition of the best power of expression possessed by the language at that stage of its development. Hence, in all those countries, these versions have had a very great influence, not only upon religious opinion and moral training, but upon literary effort in other

* Hereford's portion, the original manuscript of which is still extant, ends abruptly with the second word of the chapter and verse above mentioned: 'The ȝonge.'

I make the statement in the text in deference to the authority of the editors of the Wycliffite translations; but I think the internal evidence is against the supposition that the older version, from Genesis to Baruch, was the work of one man. There are important grammatical differences between the historical books, down to Paralipomena inclusive, and the remainder of that version. For instance, in the former, the active participle generally ends in *ynge;* in the latter, it usually terminates in *ende.*

fields, and indeed upon the whole philological history of the nation. Thus the English translations of the Wycliffite school, the Danish version of 1550, and the German of Luther, are, linguistically considered, among the very best examples of the most cultivated phase, and most perfected form, of their respective languages at the times when they appeared. The German and the Danish Bibles have, indeed, exerted a much more important literary influence than the Wycliffite. But this is due, not more to superior excellence, than to the fact that the former translations appeared after the invention of printing, and were consequently easily and cheaply multiplied and distributed; and further that their circulation was encouraged and promoted by both the temporal and the ecclesiastical authorities of the countries where they were published. The Wycliffite versions, on the other hand, existed only in manuscript during a period of between four and five centuries, and, for a hundred and fifty years, could be copied and circulated only at great hazard to both transcriber and reader.

The excellence of translation, which was a necessary condition of the literary influence of all these versions, is to be ascribed to two principal causes. The first is the obvious one, that the translators, as well as the public, were in a state of great religious sensibility, and inspired by the feeling of intellectual exaltation and expansion, which always accompanies the emancipation of the mind and conscience from the galling shackles of spiritual despotism. The other is the less familiar fact, that the three languages were then marked by a simplicity of vocabulary and of verbal combination, which more nearly agreed with the phraseology of the original Scriptures than does the artificial and complicated diction of later ages; and of course they exhibit a closer resemblance to the Hebrew and Greek texts than would be practicable with a more modern style of expression, and with a greater number of words more specific in meaning and less capable of varied application.*

* See First Series, Lecture XXVIII., p. 635.

I have already occupied so large a portion of this course in treating of the earlier forms of the English language and literature, that I cannot go much into detail with regard to the peculiarities of the diction of the Wycliffite Scriptures; but the most important of them will appear from an examination of Wycliffe's and Purvey's versions of a chapter from the Gospels, and a comparison of them with other translations.

I select the eighth chapter of Matthew for this purpose, and for the convenience of comparison I give: 1. The Anglo-Saxon version, from the Gospel of Matthew printed at the University Press at Cambridge, in 1858;—2. a word-for-word English translation of the Anglo-Saxon text; — **3.** Wycliffe's translation; — **4.** Purvey's revision; — and 5. the Latin of the Vulgate, from Stier and Theile, 1854. I add, by way of further illustration, at the end of this lecture, the Mœso-Gothic of Ulfilas, and the original Greek. Tyndale's and Cheke's translations of the same chapter will be found at the end of Lecture XI.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER OF MATTHEW.

I.

1. Soðlice þa se Hælend of þam munte nyðer-astah, þa
2. (For-)sooth when the Saviour from the mount came-down, there
3. Forsothe when Jhesus hadde comen doun fro the hil,
4. But whanne Jhesus was come doun fro the hil,
5. Cum autem descendisset de monte,

1. fyligdon him mycle mænio.
2. followed him great multitudes.
3. many cumpanyes folewiden hym.
4. mych puple suede hym.
5. secutæ sunt eum turbæ multæ.

II.

1. Ða genealæhte án hreofla to him and hine to him
2. Then nighed a leper to him and him(-self) to him
3. And loo! a leprouse man cummynge worshipide
4. And loo! a leprouse man cam and worschipide
5. Et ecce! leprosus veniens adorabat

1. ge-eaðmedde, and þus cwæð; Drihten, gyf þu
2. humbled, and thus spake; Lord, if thou
3. hym, sayinge; Lord, ȝif thou
4. hym, and seide; Lord, if thou
5. eum, dicens; Domine, si

1. wylt, þu miht mé geclænsian.
2. wilt, thou canst me cleanse.
3. wolt, thou maist make me clene.
4. wolt, thou maist make me clene.
5. vis, potes me mundare.

III.

1. Ða astrehte se Hælend hys hand, and hrepode hyne
2. Then outstretched the Saviour his hand, and touched him
3. And Jhesus holdynge forthe the hond, touchide hym
4. And Jhesus helde forth the hoond, and touchide hym,
5. Et extendens Jesus manum, tetigit eum

1. and þus cwæð, Ic wylle; beo geclænsod. And hys
2. and thus spake, I will; be cleansed. And his
3. sayinge, I wole; be thou maad clene. And anoon
4. and seide, Y wole; be thou maad cleene. And anoon
5. dicens, Volo; mundare. Et confestim

1. hreofla wæs hrædlice geclænsod.
2. leprosy was immediately cleansed.
3. the lepre of hym was clensid.
4. the lepre of him was clensid.
5. mundata est lepra ejus.

IV.

1. Ða cwæð se Hælend to him, Warna þe þæt þu
2. Then said the Saviour to him, See that thou
3. And Jhesus saith to hym; See, say thou
4. And Jhesus seide to hym; Se, seie thou
5. Et ait illi Jesus; Vide, nemini

1. hyt nænegum men ne secge; ac gang, æteowde
2. it (to) no man tell; but go, show
3. to no man; but go, shewe
4. to no man; but go, shewe
5. dixeris; sed vade, ostende

1. þe þam sacerde, and bring hym þa lac þe Moyses
2. thee (to) the priest, and bring him the gift that Moses
3. thee to prestis, and offre that ȝifte that Moyses
4. thee to the prestis, and offre the ȝift that Moyses
5. te sacerdoti, et offer munus quod

1. bebead, on hyra gecyðnesse.
2. bad, for their information.
3. comaundide, into witnessing to hem.
4. comaundide, in witnessyng to hem.
5. præcepit Moyses, in testimonium illis.

V.

1. Soðlice þa se Hælend ineode on Capharnaum,
2. (For-)sooth when the Saviour went-in to Capernaum,
3. Sothely when he hadde entride in to Capharnaum,
4. And whanne he hadde entrid in to Cafarnaum,
5. Cum autem introisset Capharnaum,

1. þa genealæhte hym an hundredes ealdor, hyne
2. there nighed (to) him a hundred's captain, him
3. centurio neiȝide to hym
4. the centurien neiȝede to him
5. accessit ad eum centurio

1. biddende,
2. praying,
3. preyinge hym,
4. and preiede him,
5. rogans eum,

VI.

1. And þus cweðende, Drihten, min cnapa lið on mínum
2. And thus saying, Lord, my knave lieth in my
3. And said, Lord, my child lyeth in the
4. And seide, Lord, my childe lijth in the
5. et dicens, Domine, puer meus jacet in

1. huse lama, and mid yfle geþread.
2. house lame, and with evil afflicted.
3. hous sike on the palsie, and is yuel tourmentid
4. hous sijk on the palesie, and is yuel turmentid.
5. domo paralyticus, et male torquetur.

VII.

1. Ða cwæð se Hælend to him, Ic cume and hine gehæle.
2. Then said the Saviour to him, I come and him heal.
3. And Jhesus saith to hym, I shal cume, and shal hele hym.
4. And Jhesus seide to him, Y schal come, and schal heele him.
5. Et ait illi Jesus, Ego veniam, et curabo eum.

VIII.

1. Ða andswarode se hundredes ealdor and þus cwæð,
2. Then answered the hundred's captain and thus said,
3. And centurio answerynge saith to hym,
4. And the centurien answeride, and seide to hym,
5. Et respondens centurio ait,

1. Drihten, ne eom ic wyrðe þæt þu ingange under
2. Lord, not am I worthy that thou in-go under
3. Lord, I am not worthi, that thou entre vndir
4. Lord, Y am not worthi, that thou entre vndur
5. Domine, non sum dignus, ut intres sub

1. mine þecene; ac cwæð þin an word, and min cnapa
2. my roof; but speak thy one word, and my knave
3. my roof; but oonly say bi word, and my child
4. my roof; but oonli seie thou bi word, and my childe
5. tectum meum; sed tantum dic verbo, et

1. bið gehæled.
2. will-be healed.
3. shall be helid.
4. shal be heelid.
5. sanabitur puer meus.

IX.

1. Soðlice ic eom man under anwealde gesett, and ic
2. (For-)sooth I am (a) man under authority set, and I
3. For whi and I am a man ordeynd vnder power,
4. For whi Y am a man ordeyned vndur power,
5. Nam et ego homo sum sub potestate constitutus,

1. hæbbe þegnas under me; and ic cwæðe to þysum, Gang.
2. have soldiers under me; and I say to this, Go,
3. hauynge vndir me kniztis; and I say to this, Go,
4. and haue knyȝtis vndir me; and Y seie to this, Go,
5. habens sub me milites; et dico huic: Vade,

1. and he gæð; and ic cweðe to oþrum, Cum, and he cymð;
2. and he goeth; and I say to (an-)other, Come, and he cometh;
3. and he goth; and to an other, Come thou, and he cometh;
4. and he goith; and to another, Come, and he cometh;
5. et vadit; et alii, Veni, et venit;

1. to minum þeowe, Wyrc þis, and he wyrcð.
2. to my servant, Do this, and he doeth.
3. and to my seruaunt, Do thou this thing, and he doth.
4. and to my seruaunt, Do this and he doith it.
5. et servo meo, Fac hoc, et facit.

X.

1. Witodlice þa se Hælend þis gehyrde, þa wundrode he,
2. Now when the Saviour this heard, then wondered he,
3. Sothely Jhesus, heerynge these thingis, wondride,
4. And Jhesus herde these thingis, and wondride,
5. Audiens autem Jesus miratus est,

1. and cwæð to þam þe him fyligdon: Soð ic secge eow ne
2. and said to them that him followed: Sooth I say(to) you not
3. and saide to men suynge hym: Trewly I saye to ȝou
4. and seide to men that sueden him: Treuli I seie to ȝou
5. et sequentibus se dixit: Amen dico vobis

1. gemette ic swa mycelne geleafan on Israhel.
2. met I so much belief in Israel.
3. I fond nat so grete feith in Yrael.
4. Y foond not so greete feith in Israel.
5. non inveni tantam fidem in Israel.

XI.

1. To soðum ic secge eow, Ðæt manige cumað fram
2. In sooth I say (to) you, That many (shall) come from
3. Sothely Y say to ȝou, that manye shulen come fro
4. And Y seie to ȝou, that many schulen come fro
5. Dico autem vobis, quod multi ab Oriente et

1. east-dæle and west-dæle, and wuniað mid Abrahame
2. (the) east-deal and (the) west-deal, and dwell with Abraham
3. the est and west, and shulen rest with Abraham
4. the eest and the west, and schulen reste with Abraham
5. Occidente venient et recumbent cum Abraham

1. and Isaace and Jacobe, on heofena rice;
2. and Isaac and Jacob in heavens' realm;
3. and Ysaac and Jacob in the kyngdam of heuenes;
4. and Ysaac and Jacob in the kyngdom of heuenes;
5. et Isaac et Jacob in regno cœlorum;

XII.

1. Witodlice þises rices bearn beoð aworpene on þa yte-
2. Verily this realm's children (shall) be out-cast in(to) the outer-
3. forsothe the sonys of the rewme shulen be cast out into vttre-
4. but the sones of the rewme schulen be cast out in to vtmer
5. filii autem regni ejicientur in tenebras

1. mestan þystro: þær bið wóp, and toþa gristbitung.
2. most darkness: there (shall) be weeping, and (of) teeth grinding.
3. mest derknessis; there shal be weepynge, and beetynge togidre of teeth.
4. derknessis; there schal be wepyng, and grynting of teeth.
5. exteriores; ibi erit fletus et stridor dentium.

XIII.

1. And se Hælend cwæð to þam hundrydes ealdre,
2. And the Saviour said to the hundred's elder,
3. And Jhesus saide to centurio,
4. And Jhesus seide to the centurioun,
5. Et dixit Jesus centurioni,

1. Ga; and gewurðe þé swa swa þu gelyfdest. And se
2. Go; and be (it) (to) thee so as thou believedst. And the
3. Go; and as thou hast bileeued be it don to thee. And the
4. Go; and as thou hast bileuyd be it doon to thee. And the
5. Vade; et sicut credidisti fiat tibi. Et

1. cnapa wæs gehæled on þære tide.
2. knave was healed in that hour.
3. child was helid fro that houre.
4. child was heelid fro that hour.
5. sanatus est puer in illa hora.

XIV.

1. Ða se Hælend com on Petres huse,
2. When the Saviour came in(to) Peter's house,
3. And when Jhesus hadde comen in to the hous of Symond Petre,
4. And whanne Jhesus was comun in to the hous of Symount Petre,
5. Et cum venisset Jesus in domum Petri,

1. þa geseah he hys swegre licgende, and
2. then saw he his mother-in-law lying, and
3. he say his wyues moder liggynge, and
4. he say his wyues modir liggynge, and
5. vidit socrum ejus jacentem et

1. hriðgende.
2. feverish.
3. shakun with feueris.
4. shakun with feueris.
5. febricitantem

XV.

1. And he æthrán hyre hand, and se fefor hig fortlet:
2. And he touched her hand, and the fever her left:
3. And he touchide hir hond, and the feuer lefte hir:
4. And he touchide hir hoond, and the feuer lefte hir:
5. Et tetigit manum ejus, et dimisit eam febris:

1. ða aras heo, and þenode him.
2. then arose she, and served them
3. and she roose, and seruyde hem.
4. and she roos, and seruede hem.
5. et surrexit, et ministrabat eis.

XVI.

1. Soðlice þa hyt æfen wæs, hig brohton him
2. Soothly when it evening was, they brought (to) him
3. Sothely whan the euenyng was maad, thei brouȝte to hym
4. And whanne it was euen, thei brouȝten to hym
5. Vespere autem facto, obtulerunt ei

1. manege deofol-seoce: and he ut-adræde þa
2. many devil-sick: and he out-drave the
3. many hauynge deuelys: and he castide out
4. manye that hadden deuelis: and he castide out
5. multos dæmonia habentes: et ejiciebat

1. unclænan gastas mid hys worde, and he ealle
2. unclean ghosts with his word, and he all
3. spiritis by word, and helide alle
4. spiritis bi word, and heelide alle
5. spiritus verbo, et omnes

1. gehælde þa yfel-hæbbendan;
2. healed the evil-having;
3. hauynge yuel;
4. that weren yuel at ese;
5. male habentes curavit;

XVII.

1. Ðæt wære gefylled þæt gecweden is þurh Esaiam
2. That might-be fulfilled what spoken is through Esaias
3. that it shulde be fulfillid, that thing that was said by Ysaie,
4. that it were fulfillid, that was seid by Ysaie,
5. ut adimpleretur, quod dictum est per Isaiam

1. þone witegan, ðus cweðende, He onfeng ure untrum-
2. the prophet, thus saying, He took our infirm-
3. the prophete, sayinge, He toke oure infirmy-
4. the profete, seiynge, He took oure infirmy-
5. prophetam, dicentem, Ipse infirmitates nostras

1. nessa, and he abær ure adla.
2. ities, and he bare our ails.
3. tees, and bere oure sykenessis.
4. tees, and bar oure siknessis.
5. accepit, et ægrotationes nostras portavit.

XVIII.

1. Ða geseah se Hælend mycle menigeo ymbutan
2. When saw the Saviour much people about
3. Sothely Jhesus seeynge many cumpanyes about
4. And Jhesus say myche puple aboute
5. Videns autem Jesus turbas multas circum

1. hyne, þa het he hig faran ofer þone muðan.
2. him, then bade he them (to) fare over the water.
3. hym, bad *his disciplis* go ouer the water.
4. him, and bade *hise disciplis* go ouer the watir.
5. se, jussit ire trans fretum.

XIX.

1. Ða genealæhte him án bocere, and cwæð,
2. Then nighed (to) him a scribe, and said,
3. And oo scribe, *or a man of lawe*, commynge to, saide to hym,
4. And a scribe neiȝede, and seide to hym,
5. Et accedens unus scriba ait illi,

1. Lareow, ic fylige þe swa hwæder swa þu
2. Teacher, I follow thee whither-so-ever thou
3. Maistre, I shal sue thee whidir euer thou
4. Maistir, Y shal sue thee whidir euer thou
5. Magister, sequar te quocumque

1. færst.
2. farest.
3. shalt go.
4. schalt go.
5. ieris.

XX.

1. Ða cwæð se Hælend to him, Foxas habbað
2. Then said the Saviour to him, Foxes have
3. And Jhesus said to hym, Foxis han
4. And Jhesus seide to hym, Foxis han
5. Et dicit ei Jesus, Vulpes foveas

1. holu, and heofenan fuglas nest; soðlice mannes sunu
2. holes, and heavens' fowls nests; soothly man's son
3. dichis, *or borowis*, and briddis of the eir *han* nestis; but mannes sone
4. dennes and briddis of heuene *han* nestis; but mannus sone
5. habent, et volucres cœli nidos; filius autem hominis

1. næfð hwær he hys heafod ahylde.
2. has-not where he his head may-lay.
3. hath nat wher he reste his heued.
4. hath not where he schal reste his heed.
5. non habet ubi caput reclinet.

XXI.

1. Ða cwæð to him oþer of hys leorning-cnihtum,
2. Then said to him (an)other of his disciples,
3. Sotheli an other of his disciplis saide to hym,
4. Anothir of his disciplis seide to him,
5. Alius autem de discipulis ejus ait illi,

1. Drihten, alyfe me ærest to farenne and bebyrigean
2. Lord, let me first fare and bury
3. Lord, suffre me go first and birye
4. Lord, suffre me to go first and birie
5. Domine, permitte me primum ire et sepelire

1. minne fæder.
2. my father.
3. my fadir.
4. my fader.
5. patrem meum.

XXII.

1. Ða cwæð se Hælend to him, Fylig me, and læt
2. Then said the Saviour to him, Follow me, and let
3. Forsothe Jhesus saide to hym, Sue thou me, and late
4. But Jhesus seide to hym, Sue thou me, and lete
5. Jesus autem ait illi, Sequere me et dimitte

1. deade bebyrigan hyra deadan.
2. (the) dead bury their dead.
3, dede men birye her dead men.
4. deed men birie her deede men.
5. mortuos sepelire mortuos suos.

XXIII.

1. And he astah on scyp and hys leorning-cnyhtas
2. And he entered in(to) (a) ship and his disciples
3. And Jhesu steyinge vp in to a litel ship, his disciplis
4. And whanne he was goon vp in to a litil schip, his disciplis
5. Et ascendente eo in naviculam, secuti sunt eum

1. hym fyligdon.
2. him followed.
3. sueden him.
4. sueden hym.
5. discipuli ejus.

XXIV.

1. Ða wearð mycel styrung geworden on þære sǽ, swa þ
2. Then was (a) great stir in the sea, so that
3. And loo! a grete steryng was made in the see, so that
4. And loo! a greet stiring was maad in the see, so that
5. Et ecce! motus magnus factus est in mari, ita ut

1. þ scyp wearð ofergoten mid yðum; witodlice he slep.
2. the ship was over-poured with waves; verily he slept.
3. the litil ship was hilid with wawis; but he slepte.
4. the schip was hilid with wawes; but he slepte.
5. navicula operiretur fluctibus; ipse vero dormiebat.

XXV.

1. And hig genealæhton, and hý awéhton hyne, þus
2. And they nighed, and they awaked him, thus
3. And his disciplis camen niȝ to hym, and raysiden hym,
4. And hise disciplis camen to hym, and reysiden hym,
5. Et accesserunt ad eum discipuli ejus, et suscitaverunt eum,

1. cweðende, Drihten, hæle us: we moton forwurðan.
2. saying, Lord, save us: we must perish.
3. sayinge, Lord, saue vs: we perishen.
4. and seiden, Lord, saue vs: we perischen.
5. dicentes, Domine, salva nos: perimus.

XXVI.

1. Ða cwæð he to him, To hwi synt ge forhte, ge lytles
2. Then said he to thèm, For why are ye affrighted ye(of)little
3. And Jhesus seith to hem, What ben ȝee of litil feith agast?
4. And Jhesus seide to hem, What ben ȝe of litil feith agaste?
5. Et dicit eis Jesus, Quid timidi estis, modicæ fidei?

1. geleafan. Ða aras he and bebead þam winde and þære
2. faith? Then arose he and bade the wind and the
3. Thanne he rysynge comaundide to the wyndis and the
4. Thanne he roos and comaundide to the wyndis and the
5. Tunc surgens imperavit ventis et

1. sǽ, and þær wearð geworden mycel smyltness.
2. sea, and there was (a) great calm.
3. see, and a grete pesiblenesse is maad.
4. see, and a greet pesibilnesse was maad.
5. mari, et facta est tranquillitas magna.

XXVII.

1. Gewisslice þa men wundrodun, and þus cwædon: Hwæt
2. Verily then men wondered, and thus spake: What
3. Forsothe men wondreden, sayinge: What
4. And men wondriden, and seiden: What
5. Porro homines mirati sunt, dicentes: Qualis

1. is þes þ windas and sǽ him hyrsumiað.
2. is this that winds and sea him obey?
3. manere *man* is *he* this, for the wyndis and the see obeishen to hym.
4. maner *man* is *he* this, for the wyndis and the see obeischen to him.
5. est hic, quia venti et mare obediunt ei?

XXVIII.

1. Ða se Hælend com ofer þone muðan on Gerasenisera
2. When the Saviour came over the water in(to) (the) Gergesenes
3. And whan Jhesus hadde comen ouer the water in to the cuntre
4. And whanne Jhesus was comun ouer the watir in to the cuntre
2. Et cum venisset trans fretum in regionem

1. ríce, þa urnon him togenes twegen þe hæfdon
2. country there ran him towards twain that had
3. of men of Genazereth twey men hauynge deuelis runnen
4. of men of Gerasa twey men metten hym that hadden
5. Gerasenorum, occurrerunt ei duo habentes

1. deofol-seocnesse, of byrgenum útgangende, þa wæron
2. devil-sickness, from (the) tombs out-going, that were
3. to hym, goynge out fro birielis,
4. deuelis, and camen out of graues,
5. dæmonia, de monumentis exeuntes,

1. swiðe reðe, swa þ nan man ne mihte faran
2. very fierce, so that no man might fare
3. ful feerse, *or wickid*, so that no man miȝte passe
4. ful woode, so that noo man myȝte go
5. sævi nimis, ita ut nemo posset transire

1. þurh þone weg.
2. through that way.
3. by that wey.
4. bi that weie.
5. per viam illam.

XXIX.

1. And hig hrymdon, and cwædon, La Hælend Godes
2. And they cried, and said, O Saviour God's
3. And loo! thei crieden, sayinge, What to vs and
4. And lo! thei crieden, and seiden, What to vs and
5. Et ecce! clamaverunt dicentes, Quid nobis et

1. sunu, hwæt ys þe and us gemæne? come þu hider
2. son, what is(to) thee and us common? comest thou hither
3. to thee, Jhesu the sone of God? hast thou comen
4. to thee, Jhesu the sone of God? art thou comun
5. tibi, Jesu, fili Dei? Venisti huc

1. ær tíde us to þreagenne?
2. ere (the) time us to torment?
3. hiđir before the tyme for to tourmente vs?
4. hidir bifore the tyme to turmente vs?
5. ante tempus torquere nos?

XXX.

1. Dær wæs soðlice unfeorr an swyna heord
2. There was verily unfar an (of) swine herd
3. Sothely a floc, *or droue*, of many hoggis lesewynge
4. And not fer fro hem was a flocke of many swyne
5. Erat autem non longe ab illis grex multorum porcorum

1. manegra manna, læswiende.
2. (of) many men, feeding.
3. was nat fer from hem.
4. lesewynge.
5. pascens.

XXXI.

1. Đa deofla soðlice hyne bædon, þus cweðende, Gyf
2. The devils verily him begged, thus saying, If
3. But the deuelis preyeden him, seyinge, ȝif
4. And the deuelis preyeden hym, and seiden, If
5. Dæmones autem rogabant eum, dicentes, Si

1. þu us ut-adrifst, asende us on þas swine heorde.
2. thou us out-drivest, send us in(to) this (of) swine herd.
3. thou castist out vs hennes, sende vs in to the droue of hoggis.
4. thou castist out vs fro hennes, sende vs in to the droue of swyne.
5. ejicis nos hinc, mitte nos in gregem porcorum.

XXXII.

1. Đa cwæð he to him, Farað. And hig þa
2. Then said he to them, Fare. And they then
3. And he saith to hem, Go ȝee. And thei goynge
4. And he seide to hem, Go ȝe. And thei ȝeden
5. Et ait illis, Ite. At illi exeuntes

1. utgangende ferdon on þa swin; and þærrihte
2. out-going fared in(to) the swine; and forthwith
3. out wente in to the hoggis; and loo! in a
4. out and wenten in to the swyne; and loo! in a
5. abierunt in porcos; et ecce!

1. ferde eall seo heord myclum onræse niwel on þa sæ̆,
2. fared all the herd (with) a great rush down in(to) the sea,
3. greet bire al the droue wente heedlynge in to the see,
4. greet bire al the droue wente heedlyng in to the see,
5. impetu abiit totus grex per præceps in mare,

1. and hig wurdon deade on þam wætere.
2. and they were dead in the water.
3. and thei ben dead in watris.
4. and thei weren deed in the watris.
5. et mortui sunt in aquis.

XXXIII.

1. Ðа hyrdas witodlice flugon, and comun on þa
2. The herdsmen verily fled, and came in(to) the
3. Forsothe the hirdes fledden awey, and cummynge in to the
4. And the hirdis fledden awey, and camen in to the
5. Pastores autem fugerunt, et venientes in

1. ceastre, and cyddon ealle þas þing; and be þam
2. city, and (made) known all these things; and about them
3. citee, tolden alle these thingis; and of hem
4. citee and telden alle these thingis; and of hem
5. civitatem nuntiaverunt omnia; et de iis

1. þe þa deoful-seocnyssa hæfdon.
2. that the devil-sickness had.
3. that hadden the fendis.
4. that hadden the feendis.
5. qui dæmonia habuerant.

XXXIV.

1. Ðа eode eall seo ceaster-waru togeanes þam Hælende,
2. Then went all the citizens towards the Saviour,
3. And loo! al the citee wente ȝeinis Jhesu,
4. And lo! al the citee wente out ȝens Jhesu,
5. Et ecce! tota civitas exiit obviam Jesu,

1. and þa þa hig hyne gesawun, ðа bædon hig hyne
2. and when that they him saw, then bade they him
3. metynge hym; and hym seen, thei preiden *hym*,
4. and whanne thei hadden seyn hym, thei preieden
5. et viso eo rogabant

1.	þ he	ferde	fram	heora	gemærum.
2.	that he	(would) fare	from	their	borders.
3.	that he	shulde pass	fro	her	coostis.
4.	that he	wolde passe	fro	her	coostis.
5.	ut	transiret	a	finibus	eorum.

The earlier Wycliffite text of the first part of the Old Testament, or that ascribed to Hereford, is remarkable both for the resuscitation of obsolete Anglo-Saxon forms, and for the introduction of Latinisms resulting from an attempt at a literal closeness of rendering.*

Both these circumstances give some countenance to the supposition, that Hereford's work is only a recension of an English prose translation belonging to a considerably earlier philological period; but there is no evidence whatever of the existence of any such, and it is not impossible that Hereford's vocabulary and accidence were influenced by a familiarity with the Anglo-Saxon version of the New Testament, and of parts of the Old.

Among the Saxonisms, I may mention the use of the gerundial instead of the passive. The Saxon gerundial ended in *enne*, and was used with the prefix *to*, like our modern infinitive. Thus, *he is to lufigenne* signified, both, *he is about to love*, and, more frequently, *he is to be loved*. This form Hereford employs, substituting the termination *inge* for *enne*, as, *al that is to werchynge*, meaning, *all that is to be wrought; the kid is to seethinge, the kid is to be sodden*, or *boiled*.

He omits the possessive sign in *s*, saying *dowȝtir husbonde, unkil dowȝtir, husbonde fadir*, for daughter's husband, uncle's daughter, husband's father.†

He uses the verb *be* as a future, as, they *ben to seyn*, for, they will say.

* In Lecture V., I accompanied the 102nd Psalm, from the Surtees Psalter, with Hereford's translation. I add to this lecture, Longer Notes and Illustrations, II., Purvey's translation of the same psalm, for the sake of comparison.

† Examples of this omission of the modern possessive sign are found in writers of the early part of the sixteenth century.

He employs *oure* and *youre* as genitives plural, not as possessive pronouns, as, *oure dreed*, the dread of us; *youre feer*, the fear of you.

He uses the Anglo-Saxon feminine ending in *ster*, as *daunster*, a female dancer, *sleester* or *slayster*, a murderess, *syngster*, a songstress.

But the most remarkable peculiarities of his style are the Latinisms.

Thus he renders the ablative absolute literally, as, for example, the viso somnio of the vulgate, not, as at present, 'a vision having been seen,' or 'having seen a vision,' but directly, *a seen sweven*.* The Latin impersonal videbatur, it seemed, he renders *it was seen*, and he constantly uses the accusative before the infinitive. Thus, instead of 'I dreamed that *we were binding sheaves*,' he has 'I dreamed *us to binden sheaves*;' but this, though most probably a mere transference of a Latin form, is possibly a native idiom, for it is of frequent occurrence in Icelandic.

In Wycliffe's and Purvey's texts, these un-English expressions disappear, and are superseded by more modern etymological and syntactical forms. The feminine ending *ster*, for example, is superseded by the French *esse*; and this ending is employed much more freely than at present, and is applied indiscriminately to Saxon and Romance roots. Thus we have daunseresse, disciplesse, dwelleresse, devouresse, servauntesse, sleeresse, thrallesse, waileresse, and the like.

The syntax of these latter translators is by no means free from either Latin or French constructions, but it is, nevertheless, much more idiomatic than that of Hereford. The grammatical change, by which the active or present participle in *-ende* assumed the form of the verbal noun in *-ing*, and which I have discussed in my First Series, Lecture XXIX., became

* This Latinism, it will have been seen, occurs also in Wycliffe, though rarely. Thus, in the 34th verse of the eighth chapter of Matthew, already given, the et viso eo of the vulgate is rendered *and hym seen*, without any regimen, the phrase being taken absolutely, as in Latin.

established while these translations were in process of execution. The distinction between the participle and the noun was kept up with considerable regularity until towards the end of the fourteenth century, when it was lost sight of; the participial termination in *-and* or *-end* became obsolete, and both participle and verbal noun took the common ending *-ing*. The former translator of the Apocrypha, the Psalms, Proverbs, and the Prophets, used the two forms, and, with few exceptions, accurately discriminated between them; but when Wycliffe took up the continuation of Hereford's work, the participle in *-end* had gone so much out of use that he dropped it altogether, and employed the termination *-ing* only, for both participle and noun. Hence, in Baruch iii. 18, which belongs to Hereford, we find, 'there is noon ende of the *purchasing* of hem,' *purchasing* being a verbal noun; but as, in his translation, the true participle almost always ends in *-end* or *-ende*, we have, Baruch iii. 11, 'Thou art set with men *goende* down to helle.' On the other hand, in verse 25 of the same chapter, in Wycliffe's continuation, 'greet and not *hauynge* eende' occurs, though *hauynge* is a true participle; and this form is always used afterwards.

Purvey's text of the New Testament is evidently founded on Wycliffe's translation, as his Old Testament probably is on that of Hereford. Purvey had thought much on the general principles of translation, and especially on the rules to be adopted in rendering Latin into a language of so diverse a grammatical structure as English. The prologue to his recension, which fills sixty large quarto pages in Madden and Forshall's edition of the Wycliffite versions, is extremely interesting. I insert, from the concluding part of it, a couple of extracts which will give the reader some idea both of his style and of his theory of translation.

For these resons and othere, with comune charite to saue alle men in oure rewme, whiche God wole haue sauid, a symple creature hath translatid the bible out of Latyn into English. First, this symple

creature hadde myche trauaile, with diuerse felawis and helperis, to gedere manie elde biblis, and othere doctouris, and comune glosis, and to make oo Latyn bible sumdel trewe; and thanne to studie it of the newe, the text with the glose, and othere doctouris, as he mizte gete, and speciali Lire on the elde testament, that helpide ful myche in this werk; the thridde tyme to counseile with elde gramariens, and elde dyuynis, of harde wordis, and harde sentencis, hou tho mizten best be vndurstonden and translatid; the iiij. tyme to translate as cleerli as he coude to the sentence, and to haue manie gode felawis and kunnynge at the correcting of the translacioun. First it is to knowe, that the best translating is out of Latyn into English, to translate aftir the sentence, and not oneli aftir the wordis, so that the sentence be as opin, either openere, in English as in Latyn, and go not fer fro the lettre; and if the lettre mai not be suid in the translating, let the sentence euere be hool and open, for the wordis owen to serue to the entent and sentence, and ellis the wordis ben superflu either false. In translating into English, manie resolucions moun make the sentence open, as an ablatif case absolute may be resoluid into these thre wordis with couenable verbe, *the while*, *for*, *if*, as gramariens seyn; as thus, *the maistir redinge*, *I stonde*, mai be resoluid thus, *while the maistir redith*, *I stonde*, either *if the maistir redith*, etc. either *for the maistir*, etc.; and sumtyme it wolde acorde wel with the sentence to be resoluid into *whanne*, either into *aftirward*, thus, *whanne the maistir red*, *I stood*, either *aftir the maistir red*, *I stood;* and sumtyme it mai wel be resoluid into a verbe of the same tens, as othere ben in the same resoun, and into this word *et*, that is, *and* in English, as thus, *arescentibus hominibus præ timore*, that is, *and men shulen wexe drie for drede.* Also a participle of a present tens, either preterit, of actif vois, eithir passif, may be resoluid into a verbe of the same tens, and a coniunccioun copulatif, as thus, *dicens*, that is, *seiynge*, mai be resoluid thus, *and seith* eithir *that seith;* and this wole, in manie placis, make the sentence open, where to Englisshe it aftir the word, wolde be derk and douteful. Also a relatif, which mai be resoluid into his antecedent with a coniunccioun copulatif, as thus, *which renneth*, *and he renneth.* Also whanne oo word is oonis set in a reesoun, it mai be set forth as ofte as it is vndurstonden, either as ofte as reesoun and nede axen; and this word *autem*, either *vero*, mai stonde for *forsothe*, either for *but*, and thus I vse comounli; and sumtyme it mai stonde for *and*, as elde gramariens seyn. Also whanne riztful construccioun is lettid bi relacion, I resolue it openli, thus, where this reesoun, *Dominum formidabunt adversarij ejus*, shulde be Englisshid thus bi the lettre, *the Lord*

hise aduersaries shulen drede, I Englishe it thus bi resolucioun, *the aduersaries of the Lord shulen drede him;* and so of othere resons that ben like.

Sithen at the bigynnyng of feith so manie men translatiden into Latyn, and to greet profyt of Latyn men, lat oo symple creature of God translate into English, for profyt of English men; for if worldli clerkis loken wel here croniclis and bokis, thei shulden fynde, that Bede translatide the bible, and expounide myche in Saxon, that was English, either comoun langage of this lond, in his tyme; and not oneli Bede, but also king Alured, that foundide Oxenford, translatide in hise laste daies the bigynning of the Sauter into Saxon, and wolde more if he hadde lyued lengere. Also Frenshe men, Beemers and Britons han the bible, and othere bokis of deuocioun and of exposicioun, translatid in here modir langage; whi shulden not English men haue the same in here modir langage, I can not wite, no but for falsnesse and necgligence of clerkis, either for oure puple is not worthi to haue so greet grace and ȝifte of God, in peyne of here olde synnes. God for his merci amende these euele causis, and make oure puple to haue, and kunne, and kepe truli holi writ, to lijf and deth! But in translating of wordis equiuok, that is, that hath manie significacions vndur oo lettre, mai liȝtli be pereil, for Austyn seith in the ij. book of Cristene Teching, that if equiuok wordis be not translatid into the sense, either vndurstonding, of the autour, it is errour; as in that place of the Salme, *the feet of hem ben swifte to shede out blood*, the Greek word is equiuok to *sharp* and *swift*, and he that translatide *sharpe feet*, erride, and a book that hath *sharpe feet*, is fals, and mut be amendid; as that sentence *vnkynde ȝonge trees shulen not ȝeue deep rootis*, owith to be thus, *plauntingis of anoutrie shulen not ȝeue depe rootis.* Austyn seith this there. Therfore a translatour hath greet nede to studie wel the sentence, both bifore and aftir, and loke that suche equiuok wordis acorde with the sentence, and he hath nede to lyue a clene lif, and be ful deuout in preiers, and haue not his wit ocupied about worldli thingis, that the Holi Spiryt, autour of wisdom, and kunnyng, and truthe, dresse him in his werk, and suffre him not for to erre. Also this word *ex* signifieth sumtyme *of*, and sumtyme it signifieth *bi*, as Jerom seith; and this word *enim* signifieth comynli *forsothe*, and, as Jerom seith, it signifieth *cause thus*, *forwhi;* and this word *secundum* is taken for *aftir*, as manie men seyn, and comynli, but it signifieth wel *bi*, eithir *vp*, thus *bi ȝoure word*, either *vp ȝoure word.* Manie such aduerbis, coniunccioun, and preposicioun ben set ofte oon for a nother, and at fre chois of autouris

sumtyme; and now tho shulen be taken as it acordith best to the sentence. Bi this maner, with good lyuyng and greet trauel, men moun come to trewe and cleer translating, and trewe vndurstonding of holi writ, seme it neuere so hard at the bigynning. God graunte to us alle grace to kunne wel, and kepe wel holi writ, and suffre ioiefulli sum peyne for it at the laste! Amen.

One of the most important effects produced by the Wycliffite versions on the English language is, as I have intimated, the establishment of what is called the sacred or religious dialect, which was first fixed in those versions, and has, with little variation, continued to be the language of devotion and of scriptural translation to the present day.

This is most obvious in the verbal forms. Chaucer, and other secular writers contemporary with Wycliffe, very generally use the Anglo-Saxon *th* as the ending of the third person singular present indicative of the verb, and frequently, though not constantly, in all the persons of the plural and in the imperative, and they also very often employ the plural pronoun *you*, in addressing a single person. Wycliffe constantly, I believe, confines the *th* to the singular verb, and never employs it for the imperative; he makes the plural ending in *en;* and never employs *ye* or *you* in the singular number.* All this is modern usage, except that *en* as the plural sign of the verb has been dropped. In short, the conjugation of Wycliffe's verbs corresponds in all points very nearly to our own, with this difference, that in modern times the strong verbs are constantly inclining more and more to the weak conjugation.†

It is curious, that the language of the original works ascribed to Wycliffe is much less uniform and systematic than that of

* Hereford's general use of the verb and pronoun is the same as Wycliffe's, but he makes the imperative plural in *th*. Thus, in Baruch ii. 21—the last passage of Hereford's translation, in which the imperative plural occurs—we find: Thus seith the Lord, *Bowith* doun youre shuldris, where Purvey has: *Bowe* ye youre schuldur. In Wycliffe's continuation, the first imp. pl. is in Baruch iv. 9, and the *th* is dropped: zee nig coostis of Syon, *heere!*

† See Illustration III., at the end of this lecture.

his translation of the New Testament, the grammar of which, instead of varying and fluctuating according to the confused usage of most authors of that time, appears to conform to a standard deliberately adopted and very regularly followed.

There is a good deal of difficulty in identifying any extant manuscript as, certainly, the work of Wycliffe, but there are several which are ascribed to him with every appearance of probability. The following extracts are taken from the prologue to Luke, in a commentary upon the Gospels, believed to have been composed by him. I print them from the preface to Madden and Forshall's edition of the 'Wycliffite Versions,' p. ix.

Herfore [a pore] caityf, lettid fro prechyng for a tyme for causes knowun of God, writith the gospel of Luk in Englysh, with a short exposicioun of olde and holy doctouris, to the pore men of his nacioun whiche kunnen litil Latyn ether noon, and ben pore of wit and of worldli catel, and netheles riche of good will to please God. Firste this pore caitif settith a ful sentence of the text togidre, that it may wel be knowun fro the exposicioun; aftirward he settith a sentence of a doctour declarynge the text; and in the ende of the sentence he settith the doctouris name, that men mowen knowe verili hou fer his sentence goith. Oneli the text of holi writ, and sentence of olde doctouris and appreuyd, ben set in this exposicioun.

If eny lernyd man se this exposicioun and suppose eny errour therynne, for Goddis loue loke he wel his originals, and sette ynne the treue sentence of these doctouris; for men desiren no thing in this exposicioun, no but profitable treuthe for cristen soulis. ˙Y sette shortly and pleynly, as Y may and kan, the sentence of these doctouris, and not barely her wordis, in as myche as thei declaren the text, and seyen treuthe groundid on holi Scripture ether quyk resoun, and accordynge with the blessid lijf of Crist and his apostlis; desirynge that no man triste more than thus to her sentence, nether to eny mannys seying, in what euer staat he be in erthe. Thus with Goddis grace pore cristen men mown sumdel knowe the text of the Gospel, with the comyn sentence of olde holy doctouris, and therynne knowe the meke and pore and charitable lyuyng of Crist and his apostlis, to sue hem in vertues and blys; and also knowe the proude and coueitouse and veniable lyuyng of Antecrist and his fautouris, to fle hem and her

cursid dedis, and peynes of helle. For no doute as oure Lord Jhesu Crist and his apostlis profesien pleynli, Antecrist and his cursid disciplis shulen come, and disseyue many men by ypocrisie and tyrauntrie; and the beste armeer of cristen men azens this cursid cheuenteyn with his oost, is the text of holy writ, and namely the gospel, and veri and opyn ensaumple of Cristis lijf and his apostlis, and good lyuyng of men; for thanne thei shulen knowe wel Antecrist and his meynee bi her opyn dedis contrarie to Cristis techyng and lyuyng. Crist Jhesu, for thyn endeles power, mercy and charitie, make thi blessid lawe knowun and kept of thi puple, and make knowun the ypocrisie and tirauntrie and cursidnesse of Antecrist and his meynee, that thi puple be not disseyued bi hem. Amen, gode Lord Jhesu.

I add chapters v. and xvi. from the 'Apology for the Lollards,' ascribed, upon probable grounds, to Wycliffe, and published by the Camden Society. These chapters are fair specimens of Wycliffe's argumentation, but by no means of his declamation, and of his invective, which he carries to lengths of great severity, exposing with an unsparing hand the ecclesiastical abuses of his time.

An oþer is þis þat is put and askid, þat ilk prest may vse þe key in to ilk man. To þis, me þinkiþ, I may wel sey þus, syn al power is of God, and, as þe gospel seiþ, þer is no power but of God, ne man may do no þing, but if he ȝeue him þe miȝt; as Crist seiþ, ȝe may wiþ out me do no þing, þat onely a man vse his power in to ilk þing, as God werkiþ bi him, and lefiþ him to vse it vnblamfully, and no forþer, and fro þat may no man lette him. And þis is þat we sey, þat we may of riȝt so, if þer be ani vsing of power, or callid power, þat is not bi Crist, þat is no power, but fals pride, and presumid, and onli in name, and as to ȝend and effect is nowȝt. Neuerþeles, a man is seid to haue power, and leue to vse power, in many wyse, as sum bi lawe and ordre of kynd, sum bi lawe and ordre of grace, and some bi lawe and ordre made and writun. And so it is seid bi lawe þat is mad of þe kirk, þat ilk prest haþ þe same power to vse þe key in to ani man in þo poynt of deþ, as þe pope; but not ellis, not but autorite in special be ȝeuun to him of þe kirk þer to. But if it be askid, if ilk prest mai vse þe key in to ilk man, þat is to sey, to assoile him, or ellis to bind him fro grace, it semiþ opunly þat ilk prest may not asoile ilk to bring him to heuyn; for þe gospel seiþ, þat Crist in a coost of þe Jewis miȝt not do ani vertu þer,

for þe vntrouþ, not but helid a ſew seek, þe handus leyd vpon, and he maruelid for þer vntrowþ; þan, wan Crist, þat is God Almiȝty, and of his absolut power may al þing, and no þing is vnpossible to him, nor no þing may aȝen stond him, and ȝet may not of his ordinat power ȝele þe folk for þer ontrowþ, and vndisposicoun, and vnabilite to reseyue, mich more ani oþer beneþ may not help, but after þe disposicoun of him þat receyuiþ. Al so it semiþ bi þis, þat þe pope may not bring in to grace, ne bles, him þat lastiþ in vntrowþ, and in þer synnis; os it semiþ bi Jewes and Saracenis and oþer swilk, os is witnessid, and of feiþful witnes. Also God ȝaue him no farrer power, not but asoyl hem þat wil leue þer synne, or to bynd hem and curse þat wil dure þer inne. And bi so þe same resoun none oþer prest may not excede. And if it be axid weþer ilk prest haþ as mykil power as þe pope, as a nenist God, it semiþ to me þat is foly to a ferme in þis case oiþer ȝie or nay, be for þat it mai be schewid out of Holi Writte. And so it semiþ al so to me it is foly ani prest to presume him to haue euyn power wiþ ilk oþer, be for þat he may ground him in þe feiþ; and foli it were to deme to ani man any power þat God haþ ȝeuun to him, or þe vsyng þer of; for certeyn I am, how euer ani man tak power to him, or vse power, it profiþ not, but in as myche as God ȝeuiþ it, and wirkiþ wiþ it, and confermiþ it; and certayn I am, þat þe power þat God ȝaue Petre, he ȝaue it not to him alone, ne for him alone, but he ȝaue it to þe kirk, and for þo kirk, and to edifying of al þe kirk; os he ȝeuiþ þe siȝt of þe ee, or þe act of ani membre of þe body, for help and edifying of al þe body. And Sent Jerom seiþ, Sum tyme þe prest was þat ilk þat þe bischop. And bi for þat bats were made in religioun bi stinging of þe fend, and was seid in þe peple, I am of Petre, I of Poule, I of Apollo, I of Cephas, þe kirkis were gouernid bi þe comyn of prestis counseil. But after þat ilk man callid him þat he baptiȝid his, and not Crists, þan was in al þe world wordeynid þat on of þe prestis schuld be made chefe, and þe seedis of scysmis schuld be tan a wey. þer as prestis wit hem to be to þer souereynis sogets be custum of þis kirk, so knaw bischopis hem to be more of custum þan of dispensacoun of Goddis trowþ, to þer sogets, þe more þer souereyns, and in comyn þei owe to gouern þe kirk. Lo I sey bischops present, and þat þei stondun nere him, prests mai in þe autere mak þe sacrament. But for it is writun, Prestis þat prestun wel bi þei worþi had dowble honor, most þat þei trauel in word and teching: it semiþ hem to preche, it is profit to bles, it is congrew to sacre, it cordiþ to hem to ȝeue comyn, it is necesari to hem to visit þe sek, to pray for þe vnmiȝti, and to fele of þe sacraments of God. Þerfor non of þe bischopis, enblawen wiþ enuy of þe fendis temptacoun,

wraþ, if prestis ouerwile exort or monest þe peple, if þei preche in kirk, if þey blesse þe floc, for I schal sey þus to hym þat wernip me þeis þings, he þat wil not prestus do þing þat þei are bidun of God, sey he wat is more þan Crist? or wat may be put beforn his flesch and blode? And if þe prest sacre Crist wan he blessiþ þe sacrament of God in þe auter, awiþ he not to blessiþ þe peple, þat drediþ not to sacre Crist? A ȝe vniust prestis þorow ȝor bidding þe prest of God stintiþ þe office of blessing, a bowt lewid men and women; he stintiþ þe wark of tong, he haþ no tryst of preching, he is dockid on ilk part, he haþ only þe name of prest, but he holdiþ not þe plente ne þe perfeccoun þat falliþ to his consecracoun. I pray ȝow prestis wat honor is þis to ȝow, þat ȝe bring in þe damage of alle þe folke? for wan worþi diligence is taken a wey fro prestis bi power, sum smiting of mischef rysiþ in þe flok; and ȝe geyt harme of þe Lordis patrimoyn, til ȝe alon wil be potentats in þe kirk. And for þi seyn oþer men þus, if a bischop in conferming þat he appropriþ to him silf wiþ out ground of þe Scripter, ȝeuiþ grace, whi not a simple prest þat in merit is more at God, of mor merit, gefe mor worþi sacraments? Sum tyme was no resoun, wan þe same was bischop and prest. And bi forn þat presthed was hied, or veriliar filyd cursidly bi þe world, ilk prest of Crist was callid indifferently prest and bischop, as it semiþ be þe wordis of Jerom.—[Chap. V.]

An oþer poynt þat is putt is þis, þat þer is no pope ne Cristis vicar, but an holy man. Þis may þus be prouid; for him be howuiþ to be halowid wiþ þe sacrament of baptem, and of presthed, and of dignite. And oft is bidun to prestis in þe lawe to be holy and halow oþer; and for hoyle of halowing of þe Lord is vp on hem. Also þus prayiþ Crist for alle his, Fader, halow hem in trowþ, þi word is trowþ, as þu hast send [me] in to þe world, so haue I send hem in þe world, and for hem I halow myself, þat þei be halowid in trowþ. And þus is hadde in decreis; Lo it aperiþ how þei schal schap þe perel of þe charge, þat þey be þolid to minister prestly oþer sacraments, for þey are remeuid fro þis not only for heresy, or oþer ilk gretter syn, but also for negligens. In wilk þingis bysily it is to not, þat þe sacrament of presthed befor oþer, more worþily, and wiþ cure, is to be ȝeuen and tane; for but if it be so ȝeuen and tane, it schal fuyle to be rate or ferme, os it is not perfitly done. Oþer sacramentis are ȝeuen to ilk man for himsilf, and silk þey are to ilk man as þei are tane wiþ hart and concience; but þis is not only ȝeuen for hem silf but for oþer, and þerfor is nede it be tane wiþ verrey hart and clene concience for him self, and as to oþer, not only wiþ out ilk synne, but also wiþ out ilk name of fame, for schunder of breþer, to was profit presthed is ȝeuen, not only þat men prest, or be

boun, but þat þey prophet. þis þe decre. Lo it semiþ þat he is not liȝtly nor profiȝtly Crists pope ne his vicar but if he be holi, ellis whi is he callid holiest ſadir? Jerom seiþ, Þei þat ordeyn of þer assessory in to prestis, and putten hem þer lif in to sclaundre of þe peple, þei are gilty of þe vnfeiþfulnes of hem þat are sclaundred. For soþ þei are chosun to þis to be prestis to þe peple, as þei ordeynid befor to dignite, so þey hauȝt to schine be for in holines, ellis whi are þei preferrid to oþer þat passun in grace of meritis. And þerfor seiþ þe pope Symachus, He is to be countid most vile, þat is befor in dignite, but if he precelle in sciens and holines. Þe Lord seiþ bi þe prophet, for þu hast putt a wey sciens, I schal put þe a wey þat þu vse not presthed to me. Þe dede of þe bischop houwiþ to passe a boue þe lif of þe peple, as þe lif of þe ȝerd transcendiþ þe lif of þe schep, as Gregori seiþ. And Bernard seiþ to pope Eugeni, Þi felawis bischops lere þei at þe to haue not wiþ hem childer so curhid, nor ȝeng men kembid or compert; certeyn it semiþ not chapletid men to ren among þe mytrid vncorteysly; þof þu desire to be prest, or be befor to hem þat þu coueitist not to profiȝt to, ouer proudly in coueiting subieccoun of hem, of þe wilk þu hernist not þere ȝele.—[Chap. XVI.]

The uniformity of diction and grammar in Wycliffe's New Testament gave that work a weight, as a model of devotional composition and scriptural phraseology, which secured its general adoption; and not only the special forms I have mentioned, but many other archaisms of the standard translation, both in vocabulary and in syntax, were adopted by Purvey and Tyndale from Wycliffe, and by the revisors of 1611 from Tyndale, and have thus remained almost without change for 500 years. In fact, so much of the Wycliffite sacred dialect is retained in the standard version, that though a modern reader may occasionally be embarrassed by an obsolete word, idiom, or spelling, which occurs in Wycliffe's translation, yet if the great reformer himself were now to be restored to life, he would probably be able to read our common Bible from beginning to end, without having to ask the explanation of a single passage.

The works of Langlande and of Wycliffe, especially the latter, introduced into English a considerable number of words directly or indirectly derived from the Latin. They produced

a still greater effect on the common speech of the land, by popularizing very many Latin and Romance words, which there is reason to think, had never before acquired a familiar currency, but had been confined to the dialect of books, or at least to the conversation of the regularly educated classes.

The circulation of Piers Ploughman among these classes was obstructed by its poetic form, which — though a recommendation in the eyes of the masses who know poetry only as an oral chant — was fatal to its success in literary circles; for the deliberate opinion and taste of the educated public had condemned alliterative and rhythmic verse as a barbarous relic of an age of inferior culture.

Wycliffe, too, was, in a great measure, excluded from the same circles, by the combined authority of the State and the Church, which had denounced the reformer, his opinions, and his translations, as heretical, and therefore as treasonable.* Hence they were circulated and read chiefly by persons whose humble station enabled them to enjoy a privacy in their studies, which the conspicuous position of men of higher rank in the social hierarchy put quite out of their reach. Still, the controversial writings and the translations of the early reformers very sensibly affected the theological and ethical nomenclatures of the English language in all succeeding time; and many of the very best features of our modern version of the Scriptures are due to their labours. They also, no doubt, contributed indirectly to the copiousness and force of literary diction; but this effect was produced, not because they were regarded as authorities in language, and studied as models of composition

* 'In this ȝere,' says Capgrave, 'the Pope wrote speciali to the Kyng for these Lolardis, *tretouris* to *God* and to the *Kyng*. In his letteris he prayed the Kyng that he schuld be redy to punche al thoo whom the bischoppis declared for heretikes.'—*Chronicle*, A.D. 1394, p. 261, 262.

While the king was resisting the pope's wishes for the repeal of the obnoxious statutes, he was willing enough to accept the support of the Lollards; but, that question settled, he was as 'redy to *punche*' them as bloody Queen Mary herself a hundred and fifty years later.

or as repositories of an enlarged vocabulary, but because they had enriched the every-day speech of the people, and thus increased the affluence of that fountain which is the true source whence all great national poets draw their stock of living and breathing words.

Although Langlande and the school of Wycliffe are not to be looked upon as great immediate agencies in the general improvement of written English, or as standards of the literary dialect in their own age, there can be little doubt that they did exercise a direct influence upon the diction of Chaucer, and, though him, on the whole literature of the nation.

It is well known that the political party to whose fortunes Chaucer was attached, and of which he was a conspicuous member, was inclined to favour and protect Wycliffe and his followers; and it must, of course, have sympathized, so far as a mediæval aristocracy could do so, with the popular body which constituted the real public both of the theologian and of Piers Ploughman. Hence it is not possible that Chaucer should have been unacquainted with the writings of the poet, or of the religious reformers; nor could a scholar of his acute philological sensibility have perused those remarkable works, without at once perceiving that they contained a mine of verbal wealth, a vast amount of the richest crude material for poetical elaboration.

Of such resources a genius like Chaucer could not fail to avail himself, and I have no doubt that the great superiority of his style over that of his contemporaries, and the more advanced character of his diction, are to be ascribed in some degree to his use of these means of improvement, — means which the more fastidious taste, or the religious and political prejudices, of other poets of the age prevented them from resorting to.

NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

I.

MŒSO-GOTHIC TEXT OF THE EIGHTH CHAPTER OF MATTHEW.

1. Dalaþ þan atgaggandin imma af fairgunja, laistidedun afar imma iumjons managos.

2. Jah sai, manna þrutsfill habands durinnands invait ina qiþands: frauja, jabai vileis, magt mik gahrainjan.

3. Jah ufrakjands handu attaitok imma qiþands: viljau, vairþ hrains! jah suns hrain varþ þata þrutsfill is.

4. Jah qaþ imma Iesus: saiw, ei mann ni qiþais, ak gagg, þuk silban ataugei gudjin jah atbair giba, þoei anabauþ Moses du veitvodiþai im.

5. Afaruh þan þata innatgaggandin imma in Kafarnaum, duatiddja imma hundafaþs bidjands ina

6. jah qiþands: frauja, þiumagus meins ligiþ in garda usliþa, harduba balviþs.

7. Jah qaþ du imma Iesus: ik qimands gahailja ina.

8. Jah andhafiands sa hundafaþs qaþ: frauja, ni im vairþs, ei uf hrot mein inngaggais, ak þatainei qiþ vaurda jah gahailniþ sa þiumagus meins.

9. Jah auk ik manna im habands uf valdufnja meinamma gadrauhtins, jah qiþa du þamma: gagg, jah gaggiþ; jah anþaramma: qim jah qimiþ; jah du skalka meinamma: tavei þata, jah taujiþ.

10. Gahausjands þan Iesus sildaleikida jah qaþ du þaim afarlaistjandam: amen, qiþa izvis, ni in Israela svalauda galaubein bigat.

11. Aþþan qiþa izvis, þatei managai fram urrunsa jah saggqa qimand jah anakumbjand miþ Abrahama jah Isaka jah Iakoba in þiudangardjai himine;

12. iþ þai sunjus þiudangardjos, usvairpanda in riqis þata hindumisto; jainar vairþiþ grets jah krusts tunþive.

13. Jah qaþ Iesus þamma hundafada: gagg jah svasve galaubides, vairþai þus. Jah gahailnoda sa þiumagus is in jainai weilai.

14. Jah qimands Iesus in garda Paitraus jah gasaw svaihron is ligandein in heiton.

15. Jah attaitok handau izos jah aflailot ija so heito; jah urrais jah andbahtida imma.

16. At andanahtja þan vaurþanamma, atberun du imma daimonarjans managans jah usvarp þans ahmans vaurda jah allans þans ubil habandans gahailida,

17. ei usfullnodedi þata gamelido þairh Esaïan praufetu qiþandan: sa unmahtins unsaros usnam jah sauhtins usbar.

18. Gasaiwands þan Iesus managans hiuhmans bi sik, haihait galeiþan siponjans hindar marein.

19. Jah duatgaggands ains bokareis qaþ du imma: laisari, laistja þuk, þiswaduh þadei gaggis.

20. Jah qaþ du imma Iesus: fauhons grobos aigun jah fuglos himinis sitlans, iþ sunus mans ni habaiþ, war haubiþ sein anahnaivjai.

21. Anþaruh þan siponje is qaþ du imma: frauja uslaubei mis frumist galeiþan jah gafilhan attan meinana.

22. Iþ Iesus qaþ du imma: laistei afar mis jah let þans daupans filhan seinans daupans.

23. Jah inatgaggandin imma in skip, afariddjedun imma siponjos is.

24. Jah sai, vegs mikils varþ in marein, svasve þata skip gahuliþ vairþan fram vegim; iþ is saislep.

25. Jah duatgaggandans siponjos is urraisidedun ina qiþandans: frauja, nasei unsis, fraqistnam.

26. Jah qaþ du im Iesus: wa faurhteiþ, leitil galaubjandans! Þanuh urreisands gasok vindam jah marein, jah varþ vis mikil.

27. Iþ þai mans sildaleikidedun qiþandans: wileiks ist sa, ei jah vindos jah marei ufhausjand imma?

28. Jah qimandin imma hindar marein in gauja Gairgaisaine, gamotidedun imma tvai daimonarjos us hlaivasnom rinnandans, sleidjai filu, svasve ni mahta manna usleiþan þairh þana vig jainana.

29. Jah sai, hropidedun qiþandans: wa uns jah þus, Iesu, sunau guþs? qamt her faur mel balvjan unsis?

30. Vasuh þan fairra im hairda sveine managaize haldana.

31. Iþ þo skohsla bedun ina qiþandans: jabai usvairpis uns, uslaubei uns galeiþan in þo hairda sveine.

32. Jah qaþ du im: gaggiþ! Iþ eis usgaggandans galiþun in hairda sveine; jah sai, run gavaurhtedun sis alla so hairda and driuson in marein jah gadauþnodedun in vatnam.

33. Iþ þai haldandans gaþlauhun jah galeiþandans gataihun in baurg all bi þans daimonarjans.

34. Jah sai, alla so baurgs usiddja viþra Iesu jah gasaiwandans ina bedun, ei usliþi hindar markos ize.

GREEK TEXT OF EIGHTH CHAPTER OF MATTHEW.

1 Καταβάντι δὲ αὐτῷ ἀπὸ τοῦ ὄρους ἠκολούθησαν αὐτῷ ὄχλοι πολλοί·
2 καὶ ἰδοὺ λεπρὸς προσελθὼν προσεκύνει αὐτῷ λέγων Κύριε, ἐὰν θέλῃς,
δύνασαί με καθαρίσαι. 3 καὶ ἐκτείνας τὴν χεῖρα ἥψατο αὐτοῦ λέγων
Θέλω, καθαρίσθητι. καὶ εὐθέως ἐκαθαρίσθη αὐτοῦ ἡ λέπρα. 4 καὶ λέγει
αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς Ὅρα μηδενὶ εἴπῃς, ἀλλὰ ὕπαγε σεαυτὸν δεῖξον τῷ ἱερεῖ,
καὶ προσένεγκον τὸ δῶρον ὃ προσέταξεν Μωυσῆς, εἰς μαρτύριον αὐτοῖς.
5 Εἰσελθόντι δὲ αὐτῷ εἰς Καφαρναοὺμ προσῆλθεν αὐτῷ ἑκατόνταρχος
παρακαλῶν αὐτὸν 6 καὶ λέγων Κύριε, ὁ παῖς μου βέβληται ἐν τῇ οἰκίᾳ
παραλυτικός, δεινῶς βασανιζόμενος. 7 λέγει αὐτῷ Ἐγὼ ἐλθὼν θεραπεύσω
αὐτόν. 8 καὶ ἀποκριθεὶς ὁ ἑκατόνταρχος ἔφη Κύριε, οὐκ εἰμὶ ἱκανὸς ἵνα
μου ὑπὸ τὴν στέγην εἰσέλθῃς· ἀλλὰ μόνον εἰπὲ λόγῳ, καὶ ἰαθήσεται ὁ
παῖς μου. 9 καὶ γὰρ ἐγὼ ἄνθρωπός εἰμι ὑπὸ ἐξουσίαν, ἔχων ὑπ' ἐμαυτὸν
στρατιώτας, καὶ λέγω τούτῳ Πορεύθητι, καὶ πορεύεται, καὶ ἄλλῳ Ἔρχου, καὶ
ἔρχεται· καὶ τῷ δούλῳ μου Ποίησον τοῦτο, καὶ ποιεῖ. 10 ἀκούσας δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς
ἐθαύμασεν καὶ εἶπεν τοῖς ἀκολουθοῦσιν Ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν, παρ' οὐδενὶ τοσαύ-
την πίστιν ἐν τῷ Ἰσραὴλ εὗρον. 11 λέγω δὲ ὑμῖν ὅτι πολλοὶ ἀπὸ ἀνατολῶν
καὶ δυσμῶν ἥξουσιν καὶ ἀνακλιθήσονται μετὰ Ἀβραὰμ καὶ Ἰσαὰκ καὶ
Ἰακὼβ ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ τῶν οὐρανῶν· 12 οἱ δὲ υἱοὶ τῆς βασιλείας ἐκβληθή-
σονται εἰς τὸ σκότος τὸ ἐξώτερον· ἐκεῖ ἔσται ὁ κλαυθμὸς καὶ ὁ βρυγμὸς
τῶν ὀδόντων. 13 καὶ εἶπεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς τῷ ἑκατοντάρχῃ Ὕπαγε, ὡς ἐπίστευ-
σας γενηθήτω σοι. καὶ ἰάθη ὁ παῖς αὐτοῦ ἐν τῇ ὥρᾳ ἐκείνῃ.
14 Καὶ ἐλθὼν ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἰς τὴν οἰκίαν Πέτρου εἶδεν τὴν πενθερὰν αὐτοῦ
βεβλημένην καὶ πυρέσσουσαν. 15 καὶ ἥψατο τῆς χειρὸς αὐτῆς, καὶ ἀφῆ-
κεν αὐτὴν ὁ πυρετός, καὶ ἠγέρθη, καὶ διηκόνει αὐτῷ. 16 ὀψίας δὲ γενο-
μένης προσήνεγκαν αὐτῷ δαιμονιζομένους πολλούς, καὶ ἐξέβαλεν τὰ
πνεύματα λόγῳ, καὶ πάντας τοὺς κακῶς ἔχοντας ἐθεράπευσεν, 17 ὅπως πλη-
ρωθῇ τὸ ῥηθὲν διὰ Ἠσαΐου τοῦ προφήτου λέγοντος Αὐτὸς τὰς ἀσθενείας ἡμῶν
ἔλαβεν, καὶ τὰς νόσους ἐβάστασεν. 18 Ἰδὼν δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς πολλοὺς ὄχλους
περὶ αὐτὸν ἐκέλευσεν ἀπελθεῖν εἰς τὸ πέραν. 19 Καὶ προσελθὼν εἷς γραμ-
ματεὺς εἶπεν αὐτῷ Διδάσκαλε, ἀκολουθήσω σοι ὅπου ἐὰν ἀπέρχῃ. 20 καὶ
λέγει αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς Αἱ ἀλώπεκες φωλεοὺς ἔχουσιν, καὶ τὰ πετεινὰ τοῦ
οὐρανοῦ κατασκηνώσεις, ὁ δὲ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου οὐκ ἔχει ποῦ τὴν κεφαλὴν
κλίνῃ. 21 ἕτερος δὲ τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ εἶπεν αὐτῷ Κύριε, ἐπίτρεψόν μοι
πρῶτον ἀπελθεῖν καὶ θάψαι τὸν πατέρα μου. 22 ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς λέγει αὐτῷ
Ἀκολούθει μοι, καὶ ἄφες τοὺς νεκροὺς θάψαι τοὺς ἑαυτῶν νεκρούς.
23 Καὶ ἐμβάντι αὐτῷ εἰς πλοῖον ἠκολούθησαν αὐτῷ οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ.
24 καὶ ἰδοὺ σεισμὸς μέγας ἐγένετο ἐν τῇ θαλάσσῃ, ὥστε τὸ πλοῖον καλύ-
πτεσθαι ὑπὸ τῶν κυμάτων· αὐτὸς δὲ ἐκάθευδεν. 25 καὶ προσελθόντες οἱ
μαθηταὶ ἤγειραν αὐτὸν λέγοντες Κύριε σῶσον, ἀπολλύμεθα. 26 καὶ λέγει

αὐτοῖς Τί δειλοί ἐστε ὀλιγόπιστοι; τότε ἐγερθεὶς ἐπετίμησεν τοῖς ἀνέμοις καὶ τῇ θαλάσσῃ, καὶ ἐγένετο γαλήνη μεγάλη. [27] οἱ δὲ ἄνθρωποι ἐθαύμασαν λέγοντες Ποταπός ἐστιν οὗτος, ὅτι καὶ οἱ ἄνεμοι καὶ ἡ θάλασσα ὑπακούουσιν αὐτῷ;

[28] Καὶ ἐλθόντι αὐτῷ εἰς τὸ πέραν εἰς τὴν χώραν τῶν Γαδαρηνῶν, ὑπήντησαν αὐτῷ δύο δαιμονιζόμενοι ἐκ τῶν μνημείων ἐξερχόμενοι, χαλεποὶ λίαν, ὥστε μὴ ἰσχύειν τινὰ παρελθεῖν διὰ τῆς ὁδοῦ ἐκείνης. [29] καὶ ἰδοὺ ἔκραξαν λέγοντες Τί ἡμῖν καὶ σοί, υἱὲ τοῦ θεοῦ; ἦλθες ὧδε πρὸ καιροῦ βασανίσαι ἡμᾶς; [30] ἦν δὲ μακρὰν ἀπ' αὐτῶν ἀγέλη χοίρων πολλῶν βοσκομένη· [31] οἱ δὲ δαίμονες παρεκάλουν αὐτὸν λέγοντες Εἰ ἐκβάλλεις ἡμᾶς, ἀπόστειλον ἡμᾶς εἰς τὴν ἀγέλην τῶν χοίρων. [32] καὶ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς Ὑπάγετε. οἱ δὲ ἐξελθόντες ἀπῆλθον εἰς τὴν ἀγέλην τῶν χοίρων· καὶ ἰδοὺ ὥρμησεν πᾶσα ἡ ἀγέλη τῶν χοίρων κατὰ τοῦ κρημνοῦ εἰς τὴν θάλασσαν, καὶ ἀπέθανον ἐν τοῖς ὕδασιν. [33] οἱ δὲ βόσκοντες ἔφυγον, καὶ ἀπελθόντες εἰς τὴν πόλιν ἀπήγγειλαν πάντα, καὶ τὰ τῶν δαιμονιζομένων. [34] καὶ ἰδοὺ πᾶσα ἡ πόλις ἐξῆλθεν εἰς συνάντησιν τῷ Ἰησοῦ· καὶ ἰδόντες αὐτὸν παρεκάλεσαν ὅπως μεταβῇ ἀπὸ τῶν ὁρίων αὐτῶν.

II.

PSALM CII. (CIII.) FROM PURVEY'S REVISION.

Mi soule, blesse thou the Lord; and alle thingis that ben with ynne me, *blesse* his hooli name. Mi soule, blesse thou the Lord; and nyle thou forȝete alle the ȝeldyngis of him. Which doith merci to alle thi wickidnessis; which heelith alle thi sijknessis. Which aȝenbieth thi lijf fro deth; which corowneth thee in merci and merciful doyngis. Which fillith thi desijr in goodis; thi ȝongthe schal be renulid as *the ȝongthe* of an egle. The Lord doynge mercies; and doom to alle men suffringe wrong. He made hise weies knowun to Moises; his willis to the sones of Israel. The Lord *is* a merciful doer, and merciful in wille; longe abidinge, and myche merciful. He schal not be wrooth with outen ende; and he schal not thretne with outen ende. He dide not to vs aftir oure synnes; nether he ȝeldide to vs aftir oure wickidnessis. For bi the hiȝnesse of heuene fro erthe; he made strong his merci on men dredynge hym. As myche as the eest is fer fro the west; he made fer oure wickidnessis fro vs. As a fadir hath merci on sones, the Lord hadde merci on men dredynge him; for he knewe oure makyng. He bithouȝte that we ben dust, a man *is* as hey; his dai schal flowre out so as a flour of the feeld. For the spirit schal passe in hym, and schal not abide; and schal no more knowe his place. But

the merci of the Lord *is* fro with out bigynnyng, and til in to with outen ende; on men dredinge hym. And his riȝtfulnesse *is* in to the sones of sones; to hem that kepen his testament. And ben myndeful of hise comaundementis; to do tho. The Lord hath maad redi his seete in heuene; and his rewme schal be lord of alle. Aungels of the Lord, blesse ȝe the Lord; ȝe myȝti in vertu, doynge his word, to here the vois of his wordis. Alle vertues of the Lord, blesse ȝe the Lord; ȝe mynystris of hym that doen his wille. Alle werkis of the Lord, blesse ȝe the Lord, in ech place of his lordschipe; my soule, blesse thou the Lord.

III.

CHANGE OF IRREGULAR INTO REGULAR VERBS.

This is an instance of the same tendency to regularity of form which was mentioned in a note on the Italian dialects, in a former lecture.

I think it much to be regretted that English grammarians have so generally adopted the designations *weak* and *strong*, instead of the old terms *regular* and *irregular* conjugation. I do not contend for the importance of a descriptive nomenclature in any branch of science, and I have given my opinions on the subject, at some length, in the ninth lecture in my First Series. But scientific designations which assume to be descriptive ought to be truly so, and this the terms *regular* and *irregular*, as applied to the English verb, eminently are, while the epithets *weak* and *strong* are not so in any sense. That is regular which conforms to the rule or type most generally adopted; or, if there be several models or standards, of equal authority, then that is regular which conforms to any of them. Now the only general rule for the conjugation of modern English verbs is that the past tense and passive participle are alike, and that both are formed by the addition of *d* or *ed* to the stem. It is true that among the few English verbs which inflect by letter-change, instead of by augmentation, small groups may be formed which agree in their mode of changing the stem; and these are often the modern forms of verbs which once were numerous enough to constitute an entire conjugation, sufficiently regular to be referred to a fixed type. But, in most cases, so large a proportion of the verbs composing these conjugations have been lost, and those remaining have been so much varied in inflection, that the ancient regularity is gone, and they can no longer be divided into normal classes. Goold Brown, in his very valuable 'Grammar of Grammars,' states the number of

'irregular' verbs in English at 'about one hundred and ten;' but as, though he introduces *keep* into his list, he omits *creep*, it is probable that he has overlooked others, and the real number is, no doubt, considerably larger. Of these strong or irregular verbs, not more than five agree in any one mode of inflection; in most cases but two or three are conjugated alike, and in very many the verb has no parallel at all. It is further to be observed, that in several instances these pairs or triplets of verbs, though now conjugated alike, were not so originally, and therefore they are doubly irregular, as conforming neither to the most frequent present mode of conjugation, nor to their own primitive type. For example, *creep*, *keep*, and *sleep* form the past tense and passive participle alike—*crept*, *kept*, *slept*: but the Anglo-Saxon creópan made past créap, plural crupon; cepan, cepte; and slápan, slep, participle slápen. *Keep*, then, is the only one of the three which conforms to ancient precedent. It should however be noted that in Matthew viii. 24, the Lindisfarne text has geslepde, the Rushworth slepte, and both Wycliffe and Purvey slepte, for the regular Anglo-Saxon slep.

It is objected to the term *regular*, that the forms it designates are more modern than the inflections by letter-change, which, it is insisted, are remains of primitive modes of regular conjugation; but this objection has no force, because we may admit a form to be *regular*, without insisting that it is *primitive*; and what are called the strong verbs in English are most truly described as *irregular*, because they do not agree in conjugation, either with each other, or with the Saxon verbs from which they are descended. For all the purposes of English grammar, *regular* and *irregular* are the best inflectional designations that have been proposed; and though, in the nomenclature of comparative philology, terms are wanted which shall distinguish augmentative inflections from those by letter-change, it is better to employ, in teaching English, the old phraseology, until some more appropriate, or at least less misleading, terms than *weak* and *strong*, shall be suggested.

LECTURE IX.

CHAUCER AND GOWER

BEFORE entering upon the special subject of the present lecture — the literary and philological merits of Chaucer and of Gower — it will be well to take a retrospective view of the condition of the English language at the period of Chaucer's birth, to glance summarily at the causes of the revolution it soon after underwent, and to consider the mode in which great authors influence the development of their native tongue in primitive eras of literature.

The controlling power and wealth of a nobility, French in parentage or descent, and the consequent adoption of the Anglo-Norman as the dialect of the court, of parliament, of the judicial tribunals, and of such of the foreign clergy as resided upon their ecclesiastical benefices in England, had, at the end of the thirteenth century, reduced English to little more than a *lingua rustica,* which was thought hardly worthy, or even capable, of literary culture; and the slender merits of Robert of Gloucester and Robert of Brunne were little calculated to raise the vulgar patois in the estimation of educated men.

Had the British crown won the permanent and established extension of its territorial possessions on the Continent, which the splendid series of victories that marked the best years of the reign of Edward III. seemed to promise, the relative importance and more advanced refinement and civilization of the Anglo-French provinces — which embraced the whole extent of

the Atlantic coast of France — would have given them a weight and a predominance in the social and political life of the kingdom, that could not have failed to be fatal to the national spirit and the national language of the English people. The reverses of the latter years of Edward's reign compelled the government to renounce, for a time, its ambitious dreams of conquest and annexation, and to strengthen itself in the affections of its English-born subjects, by thoroughly Anglicizing itself, and making England not merely the royal residence, but a chief object of its fostering care, as the real home of the throne, the domestic hearth of a united people.

But still literary culture and even rudimentary education were attainable only through the medium of foreign tongues. English was not taught in the schools, but French only, until after the accession of Richard II., or possibly the latter years of Edward III., and Latin was always studied through the French. Up to this period, then, as there were no standards of literary authority, and probably no written collections of established forms, or other grammatical essays, the language had no fixedness or uniformity, and hardly deserved to be called a written speech.

There had been some writers, indeed — such, for example, as the author of the Ormulum—whose syntax and orthography were so uniform that a consistent accidence might be constructed for them; but the grammatical system of no one would answer for any other, and the orthography varied so much, not only in different copies of the same author, but even in copies which are the work of one scribe, that we cannot doubt that there was extreme irregularity, both in the modes of spelling and in the articulation and the inflectional forms of the same words.

I have hence found it impossible to give a detailed view of the inflectional or syntactical history of this period of English — an era of confusion and transition, when no recognized standard of accidence or of grammatical combination existed— and I have only illustrated, in a general way, the few leading

characteristics of form which were common to all, or at least to most of those who attempted to compose in the vernacular dialect.

From this Babylonish confusion of speech, the influence and example of Chaucer did more to rescue his native tongue than any other single cause; and if we compare his dialect with that of any writer of an earlier date, we shall find that in compass, flexibility, expressiveness, grace, and all the higher qualities of poetical diction, he gave it at once the utmost perfection which the materials at his hand would admit of.

The English writers of the fourteenth century had an advantage which was altogether peculiar to their age and country. At all previous periods, the two languages had co-existed, in a great degree independently of each other, with little tendency to intermix; but in the earlier part of that century, they began to coalesce, and this process was going on with a rapidity that threatened a predominance of the French, if not a total extinction of the Saxon element. The political causes to which I have alluded arrested this tendency; and when the national spirit was aroused, and impelled to the creation of a national literature, the poet or prose writer, in selecting his diction, had almost two whole vocabularies before him. That the syntax should be English, national feeling demanded; but French was so familiar and habitual to all who were able to read, that probably the scholarship of the day would scarcely have been able to determine, with respect to a large proportion of the words in common use, from which of the two great wells of speech they had proceeded.

Happily, a great arbiter arose at the critical moment of severance of the two peoples and dialects, to preside over the division of the common property, and to determine what share of the contributions of France should be permanently annexed to the linguistic inheritance of Englishmen.

Chaucer did not introduce into the English language words which it had rejected as aliens before, but out of those which

had been already received, he invested the better portion with the rights of citizenship, and stamped them with the mint-mark of English coinage. In this way, he formed a vocabulary, which, with few exceptions, the taste and opinion of succeeding generations has approved; and a literary diction was thus established, which, in all the qualities required for the poetic art, had at that time no superior in the languages of modern Europe.

The soundness of Chaucer's judgment, the nicety of his philological appreciation, and the delicacy of his sense of adaptation to the actual wants of the English people, are sufficiently proved by the fact that, of the Romance words found in his writings, not much above one hundred have been suffered to become obsolete, while a much larger number of Anglo-Saxon words employed by him have passed altogether out of use.*

It is an error to suppose that those writers who do most for the improvement of their own language, effect this by coining and importing new words, or by introducing new syntactical forms. The great improvers of language in all literatures have been eclectic. They do not invent new inflections, forge new terms, or establish new syntactical relations; but from existing words, discordant accidences, conflicting modes of grammatical aggregation, they cull the vocabulary, the mode of conjugation and declension, and the general syntax, best calculated to harmonize the diversities of dialects, and to give a unity and consistence to the general speech.

If the first great writer be a poet, his selection will, of course,

* In this number of obsolete words I include terms of general application only, and not the technicalities of alchemy, astrology, and the like, which have been forgotten with the arts to which they belonged, nor those words peculiar to the religious observances of the Romish Church, which are not now understood or freely employed in England, because the English people is no longer familiar with the ritual of that religion. I should further remark that many Romance as well as Saxon words used by Chaucer are now so changed in form and orthography that they are not readily identified with their originals by persons not familiar with etymological deduction.

be in some degree controlled by the material conditions of his art; but as the poetic form embodies the highest expression of the human intellect, his diction will be in general of an elevated character, and, for æsthetic reasons, the most melodious and graceful words will be chosen, while the necessities of metre will compel the adoption of a variety of inflectional forms, whenever the accidence of the language admits of different modes of declension and conjugation.

The real benefit which great authors in general confer on their native tongue, consists, first, in the selection and authorization of truly idiomatic, forcible, and expressive terms and phrases from the existing stock; and, secondly, in the embodying of universal, and of distinctively national, ideas and sentiments, in new and happy combinations of words themselves already individually familiar. Hence it will often happen that the first great writers in any language employ, not a strange or an extensive vocabulary, but, on the contrary, a common and a restricted one; and the merit of their style will be found to depend, not upon the number of the words they use, but upon a peculiar force of expression derived from an accurate perception of the laws by which words enlarge, limit, or modify the meaning of each other, and a consequent felicity in the mutual adaptation of the elements of discourse, and their arrangement in periods.

In connection with this point, I may, without departing too far from our subject, notice a widely diffused error which it may be hoped the lexicographical criticism of the present day may dispel. I refer to the opinion that words, individually, and irrespectively of syntactical relations and of phraseological combination, have one or more inherent, fixed, and limited meanings which are capable of logical definition, and of expression in other descriptive terms of the same language. This may be true of artificial words—that is, words invented for, or conventionally appropriated to, the expression of arbitrary distinctions and technical notions in science or its practical applications—

and also of the names of material objects and of the sensuous qualities of things; but of the vocabulary of the passions and the affections, which grows up and is informed with living meaning by the natural, involuntary processes to which all language but that of art owes its being, it is wholly untrue. Such words live and breathe only in mutual combination and interdependence with other words. They change their force with every new relation into which they enter; and consequently their meanings are as various and as exhaustless as the permutations and combinations of the digits of the arithmetical notation. To teach, therefore, the meaning of a great proportion of the words which compose the vocabulary of every living speech, by formal definition, is as impossible as to convey by description a notion of the shifting hues of the pigeon's neck.

This may be readily seen by the examination of any respectable work on synonyms. The authors of these treatises, it is true, usually attempt discriminating description of the senses of the words they compare and distinguish; but their definitions have almost always reference to the exemplifications they introduce of the actual use of the words discussed; and it is from the context of the passages cited, not from the formal definitions, that the student learns the true analogies and true differences between words thus brought together. In short, without the exemplifications, the definitions would be unintelligible, while with them they are almost superfluous.*

The power of selecting and combining words in such a way that each shall not only help, but compel, its fellow to give out the best meaning it is capable of expressing, is that which constitutes excellence in style, command of language, or, in other words, the art of best saying what we have to say. No such merit is possible in the early stages of any language. The words are too few, the recorded combinations not sufficiently multifarious, to have tested and brought out the various mean-

* See Illustration I. at the end of this lecture.

ings and applications of which words are susceptible; and culture is not yet far enough advanced for the existence and conscious recognition of a range and variety of ideas, images, and sentiments, wide enough to have demanded any great multiplicity of expression.

But in the period of English literature upon which we have now entered, these necessary conditions were approximately satisfied. A sufficient variety of subjects had been discussed to create a necessity for an extensive vocabulary, and to require a great range of syntactical and logical combination. The want of words had been supplied from Latin or Romance sources, and flexibility of structure had been acquired by the translation and accommodation of foreign phraseological combinations, by the resuscitation of obsolete Anglo-Saxon constructions, and by hazarding new verbal alliances. Nothing was now wanting but the presence of a great genius to avail himself of these new-born facilities of utterance, or some special occasion which should prompt talent of a less original cast to employ them.

In all great conjunctures, political or literary, the hour and the man come together. When the harvest is prepared, Providence sends forth the reapers to gather it. Langlande and other less important labourers, including, doubtless, many now forgotten, had striven to cull, out of the chaos of Saxon, French, and Latin words which confusedly buzzed around them, a vocabulary suited to the expression of English ideas, images, sentiments; and they had somewhat blindly groped after the fittest association of these words in phraseological combinations.

At this crisis there appeared one of the greatest masters of speech that have illustrated the literature of modern Europe—a genius gifted with the keenest sensibility to those latent affinities between particular words, upon which their most felicitous combinations depend, with the soundest judgment in the appreciation of the power of individual terms, and with the most exquisite taste in the selection and arrangement of them.

The stock of words, the raw material which had already been

accumulated for literary construction, was, as we have seen already, large—so large, in fact, that no great additions were required in order to furnish a complete supply for all the demands of the poetic art. But there were still some deficiencies in the vocabulary: first, a want of words suited to the exigencies of the Romance canons of verse, which not Chaucer alone, but the taste and judgment of the English people, had decided to adopt as the laws of poetical composition; and, secondly, a great imperfection in the dialect of morals and of philosophy.

After what I have observed, in a former lecture, upon the great expressiveness of Anglo-Saxon in matters of ethical and intellectual concern, and the richness of its vocabulary in the nomenclature of the passions and the affections, it may seem almost a contradiction to affirm that this is the very point in which early Saxon-English was most deficient. But the fact is so, and it was precisely this class of native words which had, in the largest proportion, become obsolete. The Anglo-Saxons had their own translations of the Gospels, the Psalms, and some other portions of Scripture. They had a theological and an ethical literature, and there is good reason to believe that, in spite of the influence of a Romanized priesthood, the native language was more habitually employed for ecclesiastical and religious purposes than any of the Romance dialects ever had been. The obvious reason for this is found in the fact that Anglo-Saxon and Latin were not cognate languages, while the Romance tongues were, if not descended from the Latin, at least nearly related dialects, and still retained a great resemblance to it. Hence, while a French or an Italian ecclesiastic could easily acquire a competent knowledge of the language with which his own vernacular was most nearly allied, and while some traditional familiarity with its written forms was, and in fact still is, preserved among even the unlettered populace of Italy and France, the speech of Rome, the consecrated dialect of the Church, was wholly strange to the Anglo-Saxon people. The

native clergy could acquire it only by long years of painful labour, and even its technical phrases could only with great difficulty be made familiar to the mind and ear, or articulated by the tongue, of the Anglo-Saxon. There was, therefore, an absolute necessity for the employment of the native speech in religious and moral discussion; and so long as England was independent of the Continent, there existed a full religious and ethical nomenclature. But early in the eleventh century, in consequence of matrimonial and political alliances with French princes, Norman influence began to make itself felt in England, and the Conquest, in the year 1066, gave the finishing stroke to Anglo-Saxon nationality, and introduced not only a new royal dynasty, but an army of foreign priests and teachers, who naturally insisted on employing the language of Rome in all matters pertaining to the discharge of their functions. Anglo-Saxon, consequently, went very soon, at least partially, out of use as a medium of religious instruction, oral or written, and of moral discussion. When sermons and homilies were less frequently delivered in Anglo-Saxon, when that language was no longer employed by the learned in the treatment of themes connected with ethics, philosophy, and the social duties, it was very natural that the words belonging to those departments of thought should be forgotten, though the nomenclature of the various branches of material life still remained familiar and vernacular. We find, accordingly, that in the three centuries which elapsed between the Conquest and the noon-tide of Chaucer's life, a large proportion of the Anglo-Saxon dialect of religion, of moral and intellectual discourse, and of taste, had become utterly obsolete and unknown.*

The place of the lost words had been partly supplied by the importation of Continental terms; but the new words came without the organic power of composition and derivation which belonged to those they had supplanted. Consequently, they

* See longer Notes and Illustrations II. at the end of this lecture. See also Lecture III., Illustration IV.

were incapable of those modifications of form and extensions of meaning which the Anglo-Saxon roots could so easily assume, and which fitted them for the expression of the new shades of thought and of sentiment born of every hour in a mind and an age like those of Chaucer.

The poet, therefore, must sometimes have found himself in want of language suited to the largeness and brilliancy of the new conceptions, the hitherto unfelt sentiments and unrevealed images, the strange 'thick-coming fancies,' which were crowding upon him and struggling for utterance. Where should he find words for the expression of this world of thought? where metal to be stamped with this new coinage of the brain? Should he resort to the sepulchre of the Saxon race, and seek to reanimate a nomenclature which had died with the last of the native kings? Or should he turn to the living speech of a cultivated nation, whose blood was already so largely infused into the veins of the English people, and whose tongue was almost as familiar to them as the indigenous words of their own? Had Chaucer, under such circumstances, attempted the revival of the forgotten moral phraseology of Saxondom — which could now be found only in the mouldering parchments of obscure conventual libraries, and was probably intelligible to scarcely a living Englishman — he would have failed to restore the departed nomenclature to its original significance, and would have only insured the swift oblivion of the writings which served as a medium for the experiment. On the contrary, by employing the few unfamiliar French words he needed, he fell in with the tendencies of his time, and availed himself of a vocabulary every word of which, if not at first sight intelligible to the English reader, found a ready interpreter in the person of every man of liberal culture.

Langlande was the Pipin, Chaucer the Charlemagne, of the new intellectual dynasty of England. The one established the independence and the sovereignty of his house; the other, by a wise policy and by extended conquests, carried its dominion

to a pitch of unprecedented prosperity and splendour. Chaucer was a prince whose fitness for the sceptre gave him a right to wield it, and the golden words he impressed with his own image, and scattered among his countrymen, were the medals of his coronation.

Of the two causes which conspired to favour the introduction of French words into English verse — the poverty of the native vocabulary and the necessities of rhyme and metre — the latter is much the most easily detected and traced; and we observe that a very large proportion of the French words employed by Chaucer and Gower are those which contain the rhyming syllables at the end of the lines.*

I have before alluded to the necessary connection between the Romance system of versification and a stock of words accented according to the French orthoepy. This, in Chaucer's time, tended, as can easily be shown, in a more marked way than at present, to throw the stress of voice upon the final syllable †, contrary to the Saxon articulation, which, like that of the other Gothic languages, inclined to accent the initial syllable. In comparing Chaucer's versions with the originals, as, for example, in the Romaunt of the Rose, we not unfrequently find that he has transferred, not translated, the rhymes; but it will be seen that a very large share of the French words so employed by him were such as, from their moral uses and significance, were inseparably connected with Christian doctrine and ethical teaching, and had therefore become already known, through the medium of ecclesiastical Latin, to even those of the English people who were not familiar with the courtly and cultivated French.

Notwithstanding the necessity thus imposed upon Chaucer, as the translator of highly imaginative poems into a tongue hitherto without literary culture, and possessed of no special

* See First Series, Lect. XXIV. p. 538, *note*.
† See First Series, Lect. XXIV. pp. 527, 528.

vocabulary conventionally dedicated to poetical use, he was very sparing in the employment of French words not belonging to the class which I have just referred to; and he shows exquisite taste and judgment in his selection from the vocabulary of both languages, whenever the constraint of metre and rhyme left him free to choose. Hence, though the Romaunt of the Rose, and his other works of similar character, are admirably faithful as translations, their diction, which is an anthology of the best words and forms of both languages, is more truly poetical than that of the originals. In the hands of Chaucer, the English language advanced, at one bound, to that superiority over the French which it has ever since maintained, as a medium of the expression of poetical imagery and thought.

The actual number of Romance words introduced by Chaucer is very much less than has been usually supposed. His rare felicity of selection is not less apparent in his choice of native than of foreign terms. English he employed from principle and predilection, French from necessity, and his departures from the genuine idiom of the now common speech of England are few.

The general truth of these observations will be made apparent by a few numerical facts. The translation of the first part of the Roman de la Rose, or that which belongs to Guillaume de Lorris, including the few original interpolations by Chaucer, contains something more than forty-four hundred lines, or twenty-two hundred pairs of rhymes. Of these pairs, between one hundred and twenty and one hundred and thirty, or rather less than six per cent., are transferred, with little change of form, from the French text, instead of being represented by equivalent words of Anglo-Saxon origin. The convenience of employing rhymes ready matched to his hands was, no doubt, one reason why the poet availed himself of them, or, to express the same thought in another way, why he introduced into his verses the two hundred and fifty French words of which these rhymes consist.

The translation of the first part of the Roman de la Rose contains about thirty thousand words, and consequently the number of French words employed in the transferred rhymes is considerably less than one in a hundred of the whole number which make up the poem. Now, when we consider the comparative poverty of native English, stripped, as we have seen it had been, of almost its whole Anglo-Saxon moral and intellectual nomenclature, as well as of its inflectional rhyming endings, when we remember that French was the only medium of literary culture, and was almost as well known as English to those for whom Chaucer wrote, it would seem that such a proportion of French words — less than one per cent. — was not extravagantly large to employ in rhyming a translation of a French poem, even supposing that they were now used for the first time in an English book. But, in point of fact, they were by no means all now first introduced to the English public; for if we compare these words with the vocabularies of earlier and contemporaneous English authors, we shall find that very many of them had been already long in use, and were as well known to Englishmen as any words of Latin or French extraction. Several of the remaining words are not employed by Chaucer himself in his other works, and they never appear again in English literature. He availed himself of the license of a translator for a special purpose, and when that purpose was answered, the new words thus used were dismissed from further service, and heard of no more. Hence the charge, that Chaucer's poems, and especially his translations, have corrupted his native speech by a large and unnecessary admixture of a foreign verbal element, is wholly without foundation.*

* Of the two hundred and fifty French words which make up the *pairs* of rhymes transferred by Chaucer from his original, the following are wanting in Coleridge's Glossarial Index to the Literature of the Thirteenth Century: — Adamant, address (dress), advantage, allegement and allegiance in the sense of alleviation, amorous, amoret, anoint, apparent, attentive (ententive), avarice, brief, chevisance, coasting, colour, complain, conduit, confound, covine, curious, discomfiture, disease, disperance, displease, divine, embattled, endure, ensign, fable, fined,

The essential character of English, as a mixed and composite language, was indelibly stamped upon it before the time of Chaucer. As compared with Anglo-Saxon, it may properly be styled a new speech, new in syntax, and renewed and enriched in vocabulary; yet, in spite of the influx of foreign words in the course of the fourteenth century, it was no more a new language than the English nation was a new people; and it remained always a fit and appropriate medium for the expression of English thought and English feeling, changing only as the new nationality advanced and grew to the fulness of its manhood.

It is not easy to make an intelligible, specific comparison between the dialect of Chaucer and that of earlier writers, because there is perhaps no one of them whose subjects agree so nearly with those treated by him, that their diction would be presumed to correspond as closely as the idioms of their respective periods would allow. The style of his prose works, whether translated or original — if, indeed, any of them are original — does not,

flowret, fluter, foundation (foundement), garment, glory, habit in sense of inhabit, hardiment, illuminated (enlumined), jaundice, lace in the sense of net or snare, languor, lineage, losenger, meagre, mention, misericorde, moison, musard, muse, *verb*, noblesse, ounce, *weight*, person, pleasant, prise in the sense of praise, present (in present), ragonce (should be jagonce, *hyacinth*), reasonable, record, recreantise, refrain, religion, remember, remembrance, renown, request, return, scutcheon, size, suckeny, table, towel, vain, victory, vermeil. Also the following, of which the stem is found in Coleridge:—Accord*ance*, acquaint*able*, delit*ous*, despit*ous*, envi*ous*, outrage*ous*, paint*ure*, plead*er*, portrait*ures*, repent*ance*, savor*ed*, savor*ous*; and these, of which derivatives or allied forms occur in Coleridge:—Courage (courageous, Cole.), garden (gardener, Cole.), glutton (gloterie, Cole.), measure (measurable, Cole.), moneste (amonestment, Cole.), tressour (tressed, tressure, Cole.). The very rapid increase of the French element in the English vocabulary, between the beginning and the middle of the fourteenth century, renders it highly probable that many of these ninety words had already been introduced by other writers during that interval. Some of them, certainly, such as *religion* (which occurs in the Semi-Saxon of the Ancren Riwle, though, strangely enough, not in the literature of the thirteenth century), were naturalized a hundred and fifty years before Chaucer's career as an author began. When the character and value of these words are considered, I believe few scholars would convict Chaucer of the crime of *corrupting* his native tongue, even upon proof that he was the first English writer who had ever ventured to use any of them.

so far as the stock of words is concerned, differ very essentially from that of the original writings ascribed to Wycliffe, which discuss similar subjects; but they are marked by more of artistic skill in composition, and by greater flexibility and grace of periodic structure.

It is remarkable that Chaucer, eminently national as, in spite of the extent of his indebtedness to foreign sources, he certainly is, should yet never have thought of taking the subject of his inspiration from the recent or contemporaneous history of his own country. In the case of a poet who did not concern himself with the realities of material life, but was devoted to didactic or speculative views, or even to depicting the higher workings of passion, this omission would not seem strange. But Chaucer lived among the flesh-and-blood humanity of his time, and deeply sympathized with it. He was a contemporary of the Black Prince, and, as a true Englishman, he could not but have been profoundly interested in the campaigns of that heroic soldier, and proud of the trophies of Creci and Poitiers. But the glories of English and French chivalry, which shed such a golden glow on the canvas of his contemporary, the chronicler Froissart, are nowhere reflected from the pages of Chaucer. On the contrary, he seems studiously to avoid allusion to the history and political concerns of his own country, even when they lie most obviously in his path. The character of the Knight, in the Prologue to the Canterbury Tales, afforded him an opportunity of enlivening his verse with some flush of national exultation, but in his enumeration of the Knight's campaigns, he mentions none of the scenes where English valour had been pitted against the chivalry of France; and yet he tells us of this warrior, that —

A.D. 1365. At Alisandre he was whan it was wonne.
Ful ofte tyme he hadde the bord bygonne
Aboven alle naciouns in Pruce.
In Lettowe hadde reyced and in Ruce,
No cristen man so ofte of his degré.
In Gernade atte siege hadde he be

A.D. 1344. Of Algesir, and riden in Belmarie.
A.D. 1367. At Lieys was he, and at Satalie,
A.D. 1352. Whan they were wonne; and in the Greete see
At many a noble arive hadde he be.
At mortal batailles hadde he ben fiftene,
And foughten for our feith at Tramassene
In lystes thries, and ay slayn his foo.
This ilke worthi knight hadde ben also
Somtyme with the lord of Palatye,
Ageyn another hethene in Turkye, &c.

The events here referred to extend from about the date of the battle of Creci to that of the campaign of the Black Prince in Spain, but the Knight participates in no English battle; and though, when the poet speaks of the martial prowess of the Squire, his son, he mentions that

He hadde ben somtyme in chivachie,
In Flaundres, in Artoys, and in Picardie,

he does not take occasion for any expression of patriotic sentiment, or even intimate that the young soldier had there been engaged in the national service, or in anything more than private raids or the petty warfares of feudal barons, in which the honour and interest of England had no stake.

The silence of Chaucer on these subjects appears still more extraordinary, from the fact that he must have personally known the chronicler Froissart, who was long in the service of Philippa of Hainaut, the wife of Edward III., and who, after an absence of seven-and-twenty years, returned to England in the reign of Richard II., 'to iustifye the hystories and maters that he hadde written,' and to present to the king the 'fayre boke' I have mentioned, 'well enlumyned, couered with veluet,' and 'garnysshed with clapses of syluer and gylte,' in which were engrossed 'all the matters of amours and moralytees, that in four and twentie yeres before he hadde made and compyled.'*

* Froissart, chap. cc., reprint of 1812, ii. p. 609.

Froissart, as appears from his own statements, neglected no opportunity of making the acquaintance of persons intelligent in political and military affairs; and his character of a 'maker of hystories' was as well known both in France and in England as was that of Thucydides in Greece, while he was composing his immortal history of the Peloponnesian war. His reputation as a poet, too, learned in criticism and the history of French literature, would naturally have attracted Chaucer to him. Chaucer's Complaint of the Black Knight, and Froissart's Dit du Chevalier Bleu, are the same poem, in an English and a French dress, and there are some remarkable resemblances of thought and expression between Chaucer's Book of the Duchess and Froissart's Paradise of Love. In these cases, though it may be impossible to say which was the original, the coincidence proves that the works, and in all probability the person, of the one author were known to the other.

Under these circumstances, we should suppose that the historical zeal and ability of Froissart would have inspired the English poet with the desire to celebrate the same events in a poetic form. But Froissart himself did not treat historical subjects in verse, and poetry seems to have been considered a fit vehicle only for themes of a more imaginative character than the hard realities of contemporaneous martial and political life.

Chaucer borrowed much from French authors — more even than has been until recently supposed — and the influence of French literature is constantly seen in his works, even where they are not translations; but there is every reason to suppose that those from whom his tales were directly taken had, in general, as little claim to originality as himself. Continued research is constantly carrying further back the invention of the fables which we habitually ascribe to the Middle Ages, and there are but few of them which can, with any confidence, be affirmed to belong to the period in which they are first known to us as existing in a written form.

Few things in literature are more surprising than the antiquity

and universality of popular fables. Many of these, considered as natural personifications or exemplifications of universal passions and moral qualities, may be supposed to have arisen independently of each other, as the forms in which, in rude ages, certain primary ideas and opinions spontaneously clothe themselves. But there are others, so artificial in their conception and treatment, and so marked and peculiar in the selection and character of their personages, that it seems quite impossible that they could have possessed so close a similarity, if they had been original products of different ages and countries; and yet they are found among peoples between whom no intercourse can have existed since the commencement of the historic period. Every reader of Grimm and Firmenich will remember the diverting Low-German story of the race between the hedgehog and the hare, which indeed cannot, in its present form, be of great antiquity; but it is affirmed to exist in some of the North-American Indian tribes, who certainly neither derived it from nor communicated it to the whites.

In Chaucer's time, whatever had been given to the world was regarded as common property. Most works of the Middle Ages were anonymous, and authors seldom made any scruple in employing inventions or poetical embellishments which suited their purpose, without acknowledgment, and evidently without consciousness of wrong. Our modern notions of the sacredness of literary property, of the perpetual title of an author to the coinage of his own brain, are, in part at least, the fruit of circumstances dependent on the mechanical conditions of the art of printing. So long as books were multiplied only by the slow and costly process of manual copying, the additional burden of a compensation to the author, in the shape of a copyright, would have effectually prevented the circulation of most works; and writers who toiled for present fame or future immortality would have defeated their own purpose by imposing conditions upon the copying of their works, which would, in most cases, have prevented the multiplication of them altogether.

But when, by the invention of printing, book-making became a manufacture, the relations between the producer and the consumer were changed. It is true, that when once the mechanical facilities were provided, an edition could be published at what had been the cost of a single copy; but for this purpose, the arts of type-founding and type-setting must first be acquired by a long apprenticeship, and a large capital must be invested in types and presses. This capital and this industry could be secured from a dangerous competition, only by protective laws. The protection originally designed for the benefit of the capitalist, the printer, yielded returns, which, first the editors of classical works, and finally authors of original compositions, were allowed to share in about that small proportion which, in ordinary cases, the profits of the writer still bear to those of the publisher; and hence the notion of a right in literary property. This has given birth to a new feature, if not a new estate, in modern society — a class of men who live by literary production, a body of professional writers, whose motive for authorship consists mainly in the pecuniary rewards it yields, rewards which can be secured to them only by the authority of laws recognizing the right of property in literary wares, and punishing the infraction of that right as in other cases of invasion of property. The authority of law, in all well-ordered governments, carries with it a moral sanction, and the code, which establishes the legal right of an author to the exclusive use and benefit of his intellectual labours, has created a respect for those rights, that extends even beyond the limits marked out by the law.

That the legal title of the author is an important ingredient in the respect felt for his professional property is proved by the fact, that in cases which the law does not reach — as in regard to the works of ancient or foreign writers unprotected by an international copyright — the odium attached to plagiarism is less strongly felt; and the commercial spirit of our age, in this as well as in other things, is much less tender of the reputation than of the purse.

Van Lennep, the most eminent living writer of Holland, in some remarks at a congress of authors and publishers held at Brussels, not long since, to consider the general question of literary property, said: 'For nearly forty years I have lived principally by robbery and theft;' and he justified his practice by the example of Virgil, Dante, Tasso, Milton, Molière, Racine, Voltaire, Schiller, Vondel, and Bilderdijk, all of whom he declared to be as unscrupulous plunderers as himself.

When, then, Chaucer and Gower appropriated and nationalized the tales versified by French poets, or by classic authors, they felt that they were only taking up waifs, or estrays, which had been left by the original owners free to chance occupancy, and which the Norman or Roman bard had himself probably come into possession of 'by finding,' as the lawyers phrase it. It is an etymological remark worth making, now that we are upon the subject, that the very word *invention*, commonly used of the origination of a poem or a machine, radically means, not creation of that which is new, but accidentally coming upon, or finding, that which is old.

And, in fact, how much is there either historically or psychologically new in what the dialect of criticism calls invention? Shakespeare, the most original of writers, invented nothing, or next to nothing, in the way of plot or incident; and if you strip his dramas of their artistic dress and moral element, the events are just what do or may happen a hundred times within the observation of every man of experience in the world's affairs. For invention, in the way of creation of plot, for novel and startling situations and combinations, you must go, not to Shakespeare, but to what are called 'sensation' novels. There you will find abundance of incident, that not only never did, but, without an inversion of the laws of humanity, never could happen; while in all genial literature, the mere events of the story can at any time be matched in the first newspaper you take up. Just in proportion as the words or the works of the personages of the dialogue or the narrative are new to human nature

under the conditions supposed, just in proportion as they startle or surprise the reader or the spectator, they are false and vicious; and the necessary and consciously felt truth of them, as logical results of the character and circumstances of the person depicted, is the test of the genius of the writer.

The ingenious gentleman who manufactured a stupendous marine reptile out of the bones of whales was certainly a great inventor; but the judicious do not rank him higher than the learned comparative anatomist who demonstrated that the *hydrarchus* was an imposture, or than the renowned naturalist whose free choice has authorized America to claim him as her own, by a better title than the accident of birth, and who is content to accept the works of God, even as they come from the hands of their Creator.

So far as Chaucer was avowedly, or at least undisguisedly, a translator, there is of course no question of originality; but even in this capacity he shows great power of language, and the three or four hundred lines, which he has here and there interpolated into his otherwise close translation of the work of De Lorris, will be at once recognized as among the passages of the poem finest in sentiment and most beautiful in imagery and expression.*

* Chaucer's ability as a translator was known, and highly appreciated, by his literary contemporaries in France. Wright, in his curious collection, the Anecdota Literaria, publishes the following complimentary stanzas addressed to Chaucer by Eustache Deschamps, a French poet of his own time:—

BALLADE À GEOFFROI CHAUCER, PAR EUSTACHE DESCHAMPS.

[From the Bibliothèque Royale, MS. 7219, fol. 62, ro.]

O Socrates, plains de philosophie,
Seneque en meurs et angles en pratique,
Ovides grans en ta poeterie,
Briés en parler, saiges en rethorique,
Aigles très haultz, qui par ta theorique
Enlumines le regne d'Eneas,
L'isle aux geans, ceulx de Bruth, et qui as
Semé les fleurs et planté le rosier
Aux ignorans de la langue Pandras;
Grant translateur, noble Geffroy Chaucier.

It has been thought strange that Chaucer, who borrowed so freely from French literature, should have taken so little from Italian sources. He is supposed to have been twice in Italy; he professes to have learned the story of patient Griselda, or the Clerke's Tale, from Petrarch, at Padua; and he speaks of Dante with reverence, and paraphrases from the Inferno of that poet the inscription over the gates of the infernal regions. But his writings do not show much evidence of a familiarity with Italian literature, nor does he appear to be indebted to it for anything more than the story of Troilus and Creseide—which is a translation, or rather a paraphrase, of the Filostrato of Boccaccio—and that of Palamon and Arcite, which is taken from the

---

Tu es d'amours mondains dieux, en Albie,
Et de la rose, en la terre angelique,
Qui d'Angels Saxonne est puis fleurie;
Angleterre d'elle ce nom s'applique,
Le derrenier en l'ethimologique,
En bon Anglès le livre translatas:
Et un vergier où du plant demandas
De ceuls qui font pour eulx auctoriser,
N'a pas long temps que tu edifias,
Grant translateur, noble Geffroy Chaucier.

A toy pour ce, de la fontaine Helye
Requier avoir un ouvrage autentique,
Dont la doys est du tout en ta baillie,
Pour refrener d'elle ma soif ethique:
Qu'en ma Gaule serai paralitique
Jusques à ce que tu m'abuveras.
Eustace sui, qui de mon plans aras;
Mais prens en gré les euvres d'escolier
Que, par Clifford, de moy avoir pourras,
Grant translateur, noble Gieffroi Chaucier.

L'Envoy.

Poete hault, loenge destinye,
En ton jardin ne seroie qu'ortie;
Considere ce que j'ay dit premier,
Ton noble plan, ta douce melodie;
Mais pour scavoir, de rescrire te prie,
Grant translateur, noble Geffroy Chaucier.

Teseide of the same author. Chaucer's recension of this latter tale differs much in plan, arrangement, and incident from the Teseide, to which, as we shall see, it is greatly superior in imagery and sentiment, though, perhaps, not in the conduct of the narrative.

Dante was too severe, Petrarch too sentimental, for the cheerful and buoyant spirit of Chaucer, and it is therefore not surprising that he should have copied or imitated the lively Boccaccio rather than the greater but more unreal creations of those authors.

Chaucer, in fine, was a genuine product of the union of Saxon and Norman genius, and the first well-characterized specimen of the intellectual results of a combination, which has given to the world a literature so splendid, and a history so noble.

The English is the only Gothic tribe ever thoroughly imbued with the Romance culture, and at the same time interfused with southern blood, and consequently it is the only common representative of the two races. The civilization and letters of Germany and Scandinavia are either wholly dissimilar to those of Southern Europe, or they are close imitations. On the other hand, the social institutions and the poetry of the Romance nations are self-developed, and but slightly modified by Gothic influences. In England alone have the best social, moral, and intellectual energies of both families been brought to coincide in direction; and in English character and English literature we find, if not all the special excellences which distinguish each constituent of the English nationality, yet a resultant of the two forces superior in power to either.

We are not well acquainted with Chaucer's literary chronology, but there is good reason to believe that his translation of the Roman de la Rose was his first important work, and the Canterbury Tales his last, as it is unquestionably his greatest.

The Roman de la Rose is in two parts — the commencement, written by Guillaume de Lorris about the year 1250, containing

not far from forty-one hundred verses, and the sequel or continuation written by Jean de Meung, half a century later, and extending to about nineteen thousand verses. Criticism upon the literary merits of works not belonging to English literature would here be out of place; and in our examination of Chaucer's Romaunt of the Rose, we must confine ourselves chiefly to his ability as a translator, though some of his embellishments and improvements of the original will be found to deserve more special attention.

The work of De Lorris is translated entire. The continuation by De Meung is much abridged, but I believe not otherwise essentially changed. The generally close correspondence between the first part of the Romaunt of the Rose and the best printed edition of the work of De Lorris — that of Méon — affords a gratifying proof that the existing manuscripts of both are, in the main, faithful transcripts of the respective authors' copies; for if either had been much altered, the coincidence between the two could not be so exact. We are, therefore, warranted in believing that we have the Romaunt of the Rose very nearly as the translator left it, in all points except that of grammatical inflection.

In this important particular there is much uncertainty and confusion, with respect not only to the dialect of the Romaunt, but to that of all Chaucer's works. The manuscript copies of his writings in the different public and private libraries of England do not appear to have been collated by any competent scholar, and none of the printed editions, except, perhaps, Wright's Canterbury Tales, are entitled to much confidence as faithful reproductions of the codices. Caxton's second edition has been supposed to be of high authority, because it professedly conforms to a manuscript which he believed to be authentic; but this was a point on which Caxton was by no means qualified to pronounce, and notwithstanding his professions of strict adherence to his text, his avowed practice of reducing what he calls the 'rude English' of early authors, to an orthographical

and grammatical standard of his own, detracts much from the value of all his editions of works of preceding centuries.

There are certain points of inflection in all the works of Chaucer, on which we are much in the dark. The most important of these, both syntactically, and in reference to versification, is the grammatical and prosodical value of the final *e*. Most generally, it seems to have stood as the sign of the plural, but sometimes, apparently, of case, and sometimes even of gender, in nouns, and of the definite form in the adjective. But the published texts are not uniform and harmonious enough in the use of this letter to enable us to form a consistent theory of its force, and to state the rules which governed its employment. There appears to be little doubt, however, that it occurs more frequently in the manuscripts than in the printed editions. It was often obscurely written, or indicated by a mere mark, which later transcribers and printers have overlooked, and the restoration of it is, in many cases, absolutely necessary to the metre of lines which are found in the midst of passages generally of exquisite versification.*

The printed copies are very inaccurate also in discriminating between the regularly and the irregularly conjugated verbs. In modern times, not only have many verbs originally irregular become regular in conjugation, but the two systems are sometimes blended. Thus the Anglo-Saxon, creópan, *to creep*, made the past tense singular, creap. But we say, *crept*, and the like, the *t* final standing for *ed*, the usual ending of the regular conjugation, which some grammatical improver supposed to be a necessary sign of the past inflection. The best manuscripts of Chaucer do not justify this corruption, though it appears in all the old editions.

* My learned friend, Professor Child, of Harvard University, has kindly communicated to me many interesting observations on the *e* final in Chaucer, but, as he is still continuing his researches, I will not anticipate his conclusions, which I trust will soon be given to the world by himself. See Wright's Notes on the Reeve's Tale, Anecdota Literaria, p. 23 et seq.

The translation of the Roman de la Rose, in the form we possess it, is not, then, a safe authority upon the accidence of English at the commencement of Chaucer's literary career; but, from its general fidelity to the original, it affords a fair opportunity for comparing the relative power of poetical expression, possessed, at that time, by the two languages. English had not then attained to the full compass, flexibility, and grace, with which Chaucer himself, in his later works, endowed it. Still, I believe that no competent judge can examine the French text and its English counterpart, without coming to the conclusion, that the language, which, a generation or two before, had shown itself, in the hands of Robert of Gloucester and his follower De Brunne, poor, rude, and unpolished, had now, by accretion and development, become so improved as to be in no wise inferior to the original of the Roman de la Rose, in any of the special qualities that go to make up a perfect poetical diction.

The metre is the same in the translation as in the original — iambic, octosyllabic rhyme — but as the *e* final was, except when followed by a word beginning with *h*, or with a vowel, generally pronounced in both languages, a majority of the lines have a superfluous or ninth syllable in the terminal rhyme, which thus becomes an amphibrach instead of an iambus. In this respect, however, no rule of sequence or arrangement is followed, the alternate succession of masculine and feminine, or single and double rhymes, not having then become obligatory in French, as it never did in English verse.

So far as, with our imperfect knowledge of the pronunciation of English in Chaucer's time, we are able to judge, the versification of this translation, though in general flowing and correct, is less skilful than that of the poet's later works; and he exhibits less facility in rhyming in the Romaunt than in his Canterbury Tales. Thus, where a double-rhymed ending occurs, he, much more frequently than in his original compositions,

makes use of two words in one line as a consonance to a single word in another. Thus:

1374. And many homely trees there were,
That peaches, coines, and apples bere,
Medlers, plummes, peeres, *chesteinis*
Cherise, of whiche many one *faine is.*

So again:

1382. With cipres, and with *oliveris,*
Of which that nigh no plenty *here is.*

and

1577. Againe the Sunne an hundred *hewis,*
Blew, yellow, and red, that fresh and *new is.*

But these licenses are not common, and in general both rhyme and metre are unexceptionable.

To give an extended comparison between the diction of the French poet and his English translator is here impossible, and I must content myself with a specimen or two, which will serve to direct the attention of the reader to the mode in which Chaucer has embellished and improved upon his original. This he effects by the use of more expressive words, by the addition of picturesque features to the imagery, and by the greater condensation of style which the structure of English sometimes allows.

Verses 119—122 of the original run thus:—

Si vi tot covert et pavé
Le fons de l'iave de gravele;
La praérie grant et bele
Très au pié de l'iave batoit.

This Chaucer renders, in four and a half verses, thus:—

Tho' saw I wele
The bottome y-paved everidele
With gravel, full of stones shene;
The meadowes softe, sote and grene,
Beet right upon the water side.

An explanatory remark is sometimes introduced by the translator, as in the comparison of the song of the birds in the rose-garden to the chant of the sirens. De Lorris has said,

672. Tant estoit cil chans dous et biaus,
Qu'il ne sembloit pas chans d'oisiaus,
Ains le péust l'en aesmer
A chant de seraines de mer,
Qui, par lor vois qu'eles ont saines
Et series,* ont non seraines.

In the translation thus:

Such swete song was hem emong,
That me thought it no birdes song,
But it was wonder like to bee
Song of meremaidens of the see,
That, for hir singen is so clere,
Though we meremaidens clepe hem here
In English, as is our usaunce,
Men clepe hem sereins in France.

But Chaucer's amplifications of the text of De Lorris are not numerous, nor, with a single exception, of much importance. The addition, in the case I refer to, was noticed in Lecture XI. of my First Series, and I here recur to it, not only for its inherent interest, as the expression of a generous and truly English sentiment, of which there is no trace in the original, but, more especially, because, in a later work, the poet repeats, expands, and enforces the sentiment, in a tone which plainly indicates that he had been censured for expressing it, and was seizing an occasion for a spirited defence of his principles. The connection between the two passages renders it necessary to re-examine the first.

The word vilain denoted primarily a man of rustic and plebeian birth, and afterwards, from the general disposition of the high-born and the rich to ascribe base qualities to men of humble origin, it came to signify, also, ignoble in spirit, mean

* Roquefort explains this word: Joli, agréable, doux, mélodieux, paisible, modéré, tranquille, lent, grave,— rather a formidable list of meanings to be deduced from the Latin adverb, sero, *late*, to which he refers serie.

and vulgar. At a later period, the word acquired in English even a more offensive moral meaning; but in Chaucer's time, though employed occasionally by the poet himself in the same metaphorical way as in French, it was not habitually used in any other than the feudal sense of a tenant, or a serf bound to the soil he tilled, or in the more general acceptation of a plebeian, low-born person.* De Lorris had introduced this word and its derivative, vilonnie, into a passage, v. 2086, which Chaucer translates thus:—

2175. 'Villanie at the beginning,
'I woll,' sayd Love, 'over all thing
Thou leave, if thou wolt ne be
False, and trespace ayenst me:
I curse and blame generally
All hem that loven villany,
For villanie maketh villeine,
And by his *deeds* a chorle is seine.
These villaines arne without pitie,
Friendship, love, and all bountie.
I nill receive unto my servise
Hem that ben villaines of emprise.'

Villanie (vilonnie) as first used in this extract is employed in a moral sense, but in the couplet:

For villanie maketh villeine,
And by his *deeds* a chorle is seine,

villeine, as plainly appears by the original,

Vilonnie fait li vilains,

* This latter was the common meaning long after Chaucer's time, and even as late as the beginning of the sixteenth century. Fisher thus uses it, in his memorial sermon on the Countess of Richmond and Derby, mother of Henry VII., preached in 1509. Speaking of the prayer of Christ for the forgiveness of his enemies, and his expected intercession for the departed countess, he says:—'Yf in this mortall Body he prayed and asked forgyveness for his Enemyes that crucifyed hym * * * and yet nevertheless he opteyned his petycion for them; moche rather it is to suppose, that he shall opteyne his askynge for * * * this noble princes than for his mortal Enemyes, which were many and but *vylaynes*.' Bosvile's reprint, 1708, p. 24: Here the word means persons of low condition, as contrasted with the rank of the deceased 'noble princess.'

is the nominative to *maketh*, and *villanie* is its objective. Hence the meaning is: villains, or persons of plebeian rank, commit villany or base actions, or, in other words, those who are villains in a legal sense are especially prone to be guilty of the meannesses which were morally stigmatized as villany. Against this opinion, Chaucer's noble spirit, though he was of gentle birth, compelled him to protest, and he introduced into his translation this disclaimer:

> But understond in thine entent,
> That this is not mine entendement,
> To clepe no wight in no ages
> Onely gentle for his linages:
> But whoso is vertuous,
> And in his port not outrageous,
> When such one thou seest thee beforne,
> Though he be not gentle borne,
> Than maiest well seine this in sooth,
> That he is gentle, because he doth
> As longeth to a gentleman:
> Of hem none other deme I can,
> For certainly withouten dreede
> A chorle is demed by his deede,
> Of hye or lowe, as ye may see,
> Or of what kinred that he bee.*

Although the original harshness of the feudal relation between the Norman lord and the Saxon churl had been somewhat softened by three centuries of common interest and reciprocal dependence and helpfulness, yet such sentiments as these were of too dangerous a tendency to be well received by the higher classes, in an age when so many popular apostles of liberty, in France and in England, were preaching the natural equality of man. Hence Chaucer was undoubtedly blamed for unnecessarily proclaiming this disorganising doctrine, in the translation of a work which professed no such social heresy.

But the poet did not shrink from the position he had taken,

* See Longer Notes and Illustrations, III. at the end of this lecture.

and in the Wife of Bath's Tale he again advanced and maintained the opinion, that the true test of gentility is nobleness of life and courtesy of manner, and not ancestral rank. This position is enforced at much length, the argument extending to a hundred verses, and being conducted with a spirit which gives it altogether the air of a reply to a personal attack. It is as follows:—

But for ye speken of swiche gentilesse,
As is descendit out of old richesse,
Therefor schuld ye ben holden gentil men;
Swiche arrogaunce is not worth an hen.
Lok who that is most vertuous alway,
Privé and pert, and most entendith ay
To do the gentil dedes that he can,
Tak him for the grettest gentil man.
Crist, wol we clayme of him our gentilesse,
Nought of oure eldres for her olde richesse.
For though thay give us al her heritage,
For which we clayme to be of high parage,
Yit may thay not biquethe, for no thing,
To noon of us, so vertuous lyvyng,
That made hem gentil men y-callid be,
And bad us folwe hem in such degré.
Wel can the wyse poet of Florence,
That hatte Daunt, speke of this sentence;
Lo, in such maner of rym is Dauntes tale: *

* I have not been able to identify the precise passage in Dante referred to by Chaucer, but the Italian poet expresses very similar sentiments in the Canzone prefixed to the fourth Trattato in the Convito:—

E poichè tempo mi par d' aspettare,
Diporrò giù lo mio soave stile,
Ch' io ho tenuto nel trattar d' Amore,
E dirò del valore
Per lo qual veramente è l' uom gentile,
Con rima aspra e sottile,
Riprovando il giudicio falso e vile
Di que', che voglion che di gentilezza
Sia principio ricchezza:
* * * * * *
Ed è tanto durata

Ful seeld uprisith by his braunchis small
Prowes of man, for God of his prowesse
Wol that we claime of *him* our gentilesse:
For of our *auncestres* we no thing clayme
But temporal thing, that men may hurt and mayme.
Ek every wight wot this as well as I,
If gentiles were plaunted *naturelly*
Unto a certayn lignage doun the line,
Privé ne apert, thay wolde never fine
To done of gentilesce the fair office,
They might nought doon no vileny or vice.

The poet manifestly holds that gentility is not a generic distinction, and at the same time tacitly gives in his adhesion to the doctrine of the perpetuity of species, just now under discussion, in a class of philosophers who were not dreamed of by Chaucer as likely to debate that question five centuries after his age. He proceeds: —

La così falsa opinïon tra nui,
Che l' uom chiama colui
Uomo gentil, che può dicere: I'fui
Nipote o figlio di cotal valente,
Benchè sia da nïente:
* * * * * *
Chè le divizie, siccome si crede,
Non posson gentilezza dar, nè tôrre;
Perocchè vili son di lor natura.
* * * * * *
È gentilezza dovunque virtute,
Ma non virtute ov' ella;
Siccome è cielo dovunque la Stella;
Ma ciò non è converso.
* * * * * *
Però nessun si vanti,
Dicendo: per ischiatta io son con lei,
Ch'elli son quasi Dei
Que' c' han tal grazia fuor di tutti rei;
Chè solo Iddio all' anima la dona,
Che vede in sua persona
Perfettamente star, sicchè ad alquanti
Lo seme di felicità s' accosta,
Messo da Dio nell' anima ben posta.

Tak fuyr and ber it in the derkest hous,
Bitwixe this and the mount Caukasous,
And let men shit the dores, and go thenne,
Yit wol the fuyr as fair and lighte brenne
As twenty thousand men might it beholde;
His office naturel ay wol it holde,
Up peril on my lif, til that it dye.
Her may ye se wel, how that genterye
Is nought annexid to possessioun,
Sithins folk ne doon her operacioun
Alway, as doth the fuyr, lo, in his kynde.
For God it wot, men may ful often fynde
A lordes sone do schame and vilonye.
And he that wol have pris of his gentrie,
For he was boren of a gentil hous,
And had his eldres noble and vertuous,
And nyl *himselve* doo no gentil dedes,
Ne folw his gentil aunceter, that deed is,
He *is nought* gentil, be he duk or erl;
For vileyn synful deedes maketh a cherl.
For gentilnesse nys but renomé
Of thin auncestres, for her heigh bounté,
Which is a straunge thing to thy persone;
Thy gentilesce cometh fro God alloone.
Than comth oure verray gentilesse of grace,
It was no thing biquethe us with oure place.
Thinketh how nobil, as saith Valerius,
Was thilke Tullius Hostilius,
That out of povert ros to high noblesse.
Redith Senek, and redith eek Boece,
Ther schuln ye se expresse, that no dred is,
That he is gentil that doth gentil dedis.
And therfor, lieve housbond, I conclude,
Al were it that myn auncetres wer rude,
Yit may the highe God, and so hope I,
Graunte me grace to lyve vertuously;
Than am I gentil, whan that I bygynne
To lyve vertuously, and weyven synne.

The dialect of the translation of the Roman de la Rose is, in general, more archaic than that of Chaucer's later, and

especially his original works, and these latter, which reach the highest excellence of expression in the Canterbury Tales, exhibit a force and beauty of diction that few succeeding authors have surpassed.

Chaucer's translation of the Romaunt of the Rose, which was a work of his earlier years, was perhaps consciously designed as a preparation for original poetic effort. But whether so designed or not, he could hardly have selected a better exercitation or school of practice, in the use of his mother tongue as a medium of imaginative composition.

The French Roman de la Rose — or rather the first part of the two poems which pass under that name, but which are by different authors, and but slightly connected as commencement and sequel—was in a style wholly new to English, and its dialect was richest in many points, both of thought and of expression, where the poverty of English was greatest. A translation of it, therefore, was a work admirably suited, in the hands of a genial artist, to the improvement of the practical diction of English, in the points where it needed to be reformed before it could become a fit vehicle for the conceptions of a truly original poetic spirit.

Indeed it may be said, as a general truth, that one of the very best methods of learning to express ourselves aptly in our native language is to habituate ourselves to the utterance of thoughts and the portrayal of images conceived by other minds, and embodied in other tongues, and there is perhaps no practice, by which we can so readily acquire the command of an extensive vocabulary, or give to our personal dialect so great a compass, flexibility and variety of expression, as by the translation of authors whose thoughts run in channels not familiar to our native literature.

Nor is it that, in translation, we borrow either the words, or even the phraseological combinations of those from whom we translate. This would be but a restamping of old coin without effacing the foreign image and superscription, a slavish imita-

tion of the original, which a man capable, or ambitious of becoming capable, of well using his own tongue, could not descend to. But it is, that when we think another man's thoughts in our own words, we are forced out of the familiar beats of our own personal diction, and compelled sometimes to employ vocables and verbal combinations, which, though they may be perfectly idiomatic, we have not before appropriated and made our own by habitual use, sometimes to negotiate new alliances between vernacular words, which, if they never have yet been joined together, nevertheless lawfully and profitably may be.*

It is impossible here to go into a critical examination of the numerous works of Chaucer, original and imitative, and the space at our command will only enable us to take a cursory view of some of the more important of his remaining poems. Of the former class, one of the best known is the Troilus and Creseide, which is founded on the Filostrato of Boccaccio, and in part directly translated from that author. The additions to the Italian are extensive, important, and probably mainly original, though certainly, in part, derived from French writers. Chaucer himself makes no mention of Boccaccio, but professes to derive the incidents of the story from Lollius, a Latin author; but no Latin original is known, nor have the longer additions been traced to any other source. It cannot be said that the poem is essentially improved by the changes of the translator, though, in some passages, great skill in the use of words is exhibited, and the native humour of Chaucer pervades many portions of the story, which, in the hands of Boccaccio, were of a graver cast; but, upon the whole, the merit of Chaucer's

* Maister Cheekes iudgement was great in translating out of one tongue into an other, and better skill he had in our English speach to iudge of the Phrases and properties of wordes, and to diuide sentences, than any else had that I haue knowne. And often he wouldo englyshe his matters out of the Latine or Greeke vpon the sodeyne, by looking of the booke onely without reading or construing at all: An vsage right worthie and verie profitable for all men, as well for the vnderstanding of the booke, as also for the aptnesse of framing the Authors meaning and bettering thereby their iudgement, and therewithall perfiting their tongue and vtterance of speach.—*Epistle to Wilson's Translation of Demosthenes.* London: 1570.

contributions to the original tale is not such as, in a brief and general view of his poetical and philological character, to repay an analysis.

The exquisite poem, the Flower and the Leaf, is, I am afraid, better known by Dryden's modernization of it than by the original text. It first appeared in 1597, and its authenticity has been suspected, but the internal evidence is almost decisive in its favour. Chaucer himself, in the Legend of Good Women, expressly alludes to the subject, as one on which he had written, and there can be little doubt that the poem in question is his. Parts of it have been shown to be imitations or translations from the French, but these constitute an inconsiderable proportion of the work, and it must be regarded as among the most truly original, as it certainly is one of the finest, of Chaucer productions. Indeed it may be said, with respect to many of the poet's alleged obligations to Romance authors, the evidence of which has been industriously collected by Sandras and others, that the passages cited in proof of the theory that our author was little better than a translator, are, for the most part, mere commonplaces, which are found in all literatures, and the true origin of which dates so far back that no Romance author, ancient or modern, can fairly be supposed to have first expressed them.

The general plan of the Flower and the Leaf is well enough, though somewhat quaintly, stated by the first editor:

> A gentlewoman, out of an arbour in a grove, seeth a great companie of knights and ladies in a daunce upon the greene grasse: the which being ended, they all kneele downe, and do honour to the daisie, some to the flower, and some to the leafe. Afterward this gentlewoman learneth by one of these ladies the meaning hereof, which is this: They which honour the flower, a thing fading with every blast, are such as looke after beautie and worldly pleasure. But they that honour the leafe, which abideth with the root, notwithstanding the frosts and winter stormes, are they which follow vertue and during qualities, without regard of worldly respects.

One of the most striking characteristics of this poem is the

sympathy it manifests with nature. Some tokens of this feeling are discoverable in Piers Ploughman, but it is first fully displayed by Chaucer. The same sensibility to the charms of rural scenery and landscape beauty is indeed shown elsewhere by our author, but perhaps nowhere in so high a degree. This feature of the poem renders it probable that it is one of Chaucer's later works; for the perception of landscape beauty depends upon a long training of the eye, which is hardly perfected until a somewhat advanced period of life. In the hey-day of youth, we do not see God in his works, and the increased enjoyment of rural scenery is one of the compensations reserved by Providence for the sober age of those who have so familiarized themselves with the ways of Nature as to understand some of the many voices in which she speaks to her children.*

But the love of nature, as exhibited in this poem, is rather a matter of feeling than of intelligent appreciation or of refined taste; for the description of the grove applies to the clipped and

* I venture here to quote a passage from a discourse of my own, delivered and published in 1847:—

'The age of the wise man has another compensation. It has been wisely ordered, that the sense of material beauty in the myriad forms of spontaneous nature and formative art, is the last developed of all the powers of sensuous perception. It cannot arrive at its full perfection until the abatement of the "natural force" allows to the pure intelligence its due superiority over the physical energies, and the sense to which the impressions of visible beauty are addressed has been refined and spiritualized by long, and perhaps unconscious, æsthetical cultivation. We say unconscious cultivation, for in this school of life our great teacher often disguises her lessons. Of all our organs, the eye is the most susceptible of culture, and it is the one for whose involuntary training Nature has made the largest provision. Untaught, newborn vision distinguishes but outline and colour, and it is long observation, alone, that gives the perception of the relief which springs from the distribution of light and shade, the notions of distance and relative position, and the estimate of comparative magnitudes. Thus far, unreflecting experience carries her pupil. But the ethereal perception of beauty is a product of the period when strengthening intellect has acquired its full dominion over mortified passion, the superadded fruit of moral culture, and it attains not its ripeness, save under the rays of an autumnal sun. Nature has thus reserved for the sober eye of age the most intelligent appreciation, and the most exquisite enjoyment, of the choicest of her sensuous gifts, and the evening of the scholar who has made his life a discipline is cheered by the most ennobling contemplations of the world of intellect, and gilded with the most exalted pleasures of the world of sense.'

trimmed artificial plantation, and not to the wild and free luxuriance of forest growth. Chaucer here unfortunately followed his literary reminiscences, instead of trusting to his own instincts and his taste; for he is borrowing from a French poet when he speaks of the 'okes great,' which grew 'streight as a line,' and at equal distances from each other,* and of the 'hegge,'—

> Wrethen in fere so well and cunningly,
> That every branch and leafe grew by mesure,
> Plaine as a bord, of an height by and by.

But this description of the turf must have been original, for it is in England that one oftenest finds:

> The grene gras
> So small, so thicke, so short, so fresh of hew,
> That most like unto green wool wot I it was.

I believe no old manuscript of the Flower and the Leaf is known to be extant. This is much to be regretted, because Speght's edition is evidently exceedingly corrupt, and the versification, which seems to have been very polished and mellifluous, is much impaired by the inaccuracy of the text.

* Dans le Dit du Lyon (de G. Machault), les arbres de l'île où aborde le poète, sont tous de même hauteur, et plantés à égale distance; genre de paysage déjà décrit par G. de Lorris et qui charmait les anciens Bretons.

> Li vergiers étoit compassez,
> Car d'arbres y avoit assez,
> Mais de groissour et de hautesse
> Furent pareil, et par noblesse
> Planté si, que nulz ne savoit
> Com plus de l'un à l'autre avoit.
>
> *Sandras, Etude sur Chaucer*, p. 100.

In the translation of Owen, or the Lady of the Fountain, by Villemarqué, is this passage: "Après avoir erré longtemps, j'arrivai dans la plus belle vallée du monde; là s'élevaient des arbres, tous de même hauteur;" and in a note, two similar passages from the Myvyrian and the Mabinogion are cited.—Villemarqué, Les Romans de la Table Ronde, pp. 181, 228. This seems to indicate a taste generated, or rather depraved, by a too artificial civilization, such as we can hardly suppose to have existed in any early Celtic nation.

Chaucer's greatest work, that on which his claim to be ranked among the first ornaments of modern literature must principally rest, is his Canterbury Tales. This is a collection of stories related by the members of a company of pilgrims as they rode together to worship and pay their vows at the shrine of 'the holy blisful martir,' St. Thomas à Becket.

The host of an inn, the Tabard, at Southwark—where the pilgrims, twenty-nine in number, accidentally meet on their way to Canterbury, and pass the night—joins their company, and acts as the presiding spirit of the party. It is agreed that each pilgrim shall tell at least one tale—for there is some confusion about the number—on the journey to Canterbury, and another on the return; but the whole number of stories is twenty-four only, Chaucer having died before the work was completed. After a brief introduction, filled with the most cheerful images of spring, the season of the pilgrimage, the poet commences the narrative with a description of the person and the character of each member of the party. This description extends to about seven hundred lines, and, of course, affords space for a very spirited and graphic portrayal of the physical aspect, and an outline of the moral features, of each. This latter part of the description is generally more rapidly sketched, because it was a part of the author's plan to allow his personages to bring out their special traits of character, and thus to depict and individualize themselves, in the interludes between the tales. The selection of the pilgrims is evidently made with reference to this object of developement in action, and therefore constitutes an essential feature of the plot. We have persons of all the ranks not too far removed from each other by artificial distinctions, to be supposed capable of associating upon that footing of temporary equality, which is the law of good fellowship, among travellers bound on the same journey and accidentally brought together. All the great classes of English humanity are thus represented, and opportunity is given for the display of the harmonies and the

jealousies which now united, now divided the interests of different orders and different vocations in the commonwealth. The clerical pilgrims, it will be observed, are proportionately very numerous. The exposure of the corruptions of the church was doubtless a leading aim with the poet, and if the whole series, which was designed to extend to at least fifty-eight tales, had been completed, the criminations and recriminations of the jealous ecclesiastics would have exhibited the whole profession in an unenviable light. But Chaucer could be just as well as severe. His portrait of the prioress, though it does not spare the affectations of the lady, is complimentary; and his 'good man of religion,' the 'pore Persoun of a toun,' of whom it is said that—

> Cristes lore, and his apostles twelve,
> He taught, and ferst he folwed it himselve,

has been hundreds of times quoted as one of the most beautiful pictures of charity, humility, and generous, conscientious, intelligent devotion to the duties of the clerical calling, which can be found in the whole range of English literature.

None of these sketches, I believe, has ever been traced to a foreign source, and they are so thoroughly national, that it is hardly possible to suppose that any imagination but that of an Englishman could have conceived them. In the first introduction of the individuals described in the prologues to the several stories, and in the dialogues which occur at the pauses between the tales, wherever, in short, the narrators appear in their own persons, the characters are as well marked and discriminated, and as harmonious and consistent in action, as in the best comedies of modern times. Although, therefore, there is, in the plan of the composition, nothing of technical dramatic form or incident, yet the admirable conception of character, the consummate skill with which each is sustained and developed, and the nature, life, and spirit of the dialogue, abundantly prove, that if the drama had been known in Chaucer's time as a

branch of living literature, he might have attained to as high excellence in comedy as any English or Continental writer.

The story of a comedy is but a contrivance to bring the characters into contact and relation with each other, and the invention of a suitable plot is a matter altogether too simple to have created the slightest difficulty to a mind like Chaucer's. He is essentially a dramatist, and if his great work does not appear in the conventional dramatic form, it is an accident of the time, and by no means proves a want of power of original conception or of artistic skill in the author.

This is a point of interest in the history of modern literature, because it is probably the first instance of the exhibition of unquestionable dramatic genius in either the Gothic or the Romance languages. I do not mean that there had previously existed, in modern Europe, nothing like histrionic representation of real or imaginary events; but neither the Decameron of Boccaccio, to which the Canterbury Tales have been compared, nor any of the Mysteries and Moralities, or other imaginative works of the Middle Ages, in which several personages are introduced, show any such power of conceiving and sustaining individual character, as to prove that its author could have furnished the *personnel* of a respectable play. Chaucer, therefore, may fairly be said to be not only the earliest dramatic genius of modern Europe, but to have been a dramatist before that which is technically known as the existing drama was invented.*

The tales related by the pilgrims are as various as the characters of the narrators, grave, gay, pathetic, humorous, moral, licentious, chivalric and vulgar. Few of the stories — perhaps none of them — are original in invention, and some are little more than close translations from the Latin or the French;

* The second volume of the Reliquiæ Antiquæ of Wright and Halliwell contains a sermon written in Chaucer's own time against 'Miracle Plays.' It is of considerable interest, both from its subject, and as a philological monument, and I subjoin to this lecture copious extracts from it. See Longer Notes and Illustrations, IV.

but most, especially those of a gayer cast, are thoroughly imbued with Chaucer's spirit and with English national humour; they have been animated with a new life, and all that constitutes their real literary value is entirely the poet's own.

It is of course impossible to give an analysis of any number of these tales, and nothing but the perusal of them can convey to the student the least idea of their extraordinary merit.

There are, however, besides the general features to which I have alluded, some traits which remarkably distinguish all the tales — with the exception of two or three professedly didactic in character — from most of Chaucer's imitative works. They are pervaded with an eminently practical, life-like tone, and a pithy sententiousness which, by the exceeding appositeness of the sentiment to the circumstances detailed, is strikingly contrasted with the moral platitudes and exhausted commonplaces of the French poets he so often copies, and still more strongly distinguished from the ethical lessons with which contemporaneous writers so freely sprinkle their pages. English morality has generally been ethics in action, not in theory or profession, and Chaucer modified most of his Canterbury Tales in accordance with this trait of the national character.

The tale which is most unmistakably marked with the peculiarities of Chaucer's genius, and is therefore the most characteristic of the series, is the Nonne Prestes Tale. This is a story of the carrying off of a cock by a fox, and the escape of the fowl from the devourer through the folly of Reynard in opening his mouth to mock his pursuers, in compliance with the advice of his prey. These mere incidents are certainly not of Chaucer's invention, and the naked plan of the tale has been thought to be borrowed from a French fable of about forty lines, found in the poems of Marie of France; but Chaucer has extended it to more than six hundred verses, the part thus added consisting chiefly of a dialogue — for, 'at thilke tyme,' 'Bestis and briddes could speke and synge' — on the warnings conveyed by visions, between the cock, who had been terrified

by a dream, and the pride of his harem, 'fayre damysel Pertilote,' whom he had waked by snoring in the agonies of his nightmare. In this discussion Partlet assails Chanticleer with both ridicule and argument, trying half to shame and half to reason him out of his unmanly fears: —

'Away!' quod sche, 'fy on yow, herteles!
Allas!' quod sche, 'for by that God above!
Now have ye lost myn hert, and al my love;
I can nought love a coward, by my feith.
For certis, what so eny womman seith,
We alle desiren, if it mighte be,
To have housbondes, hardy, riche, and fre,
And secré and no nygard, ne no fool,
Ne him that is agast of every tool,
Ne noon avaunter, by that God above!
How dorst ye sayn, for schame! unto your love,
That any thing might make yow afferd?
Have ye no mannes hert, and han a berd?'

She ascribes his dream to 'repleccioun,' quotes 'Catoun, which that was so wise a man,' as saying, 'ne do no force of dremes,' and recommends an energetic course of remedies: —

Of lauriol, century and fumytere,
Or elles of elder bery, that growith there,
Of catapus, or of gaytre beriis,
Of erbe yve that groweth in our yerd.

The cock, in his reply, questions the authority of Cato, and shows much reading, quoting freely from legendary and classic lore. He pities the womanly ignorance of his feathered spouse, and, apropos of the legend of 'Seint Kenelm,' says: —

'I hadde lever than my schert,
That ye had rad his legend, as have I,
Dame Pertelot, I say yow trewely,
Macrobius, that writ the avisioun
In Auffrik of the worthy Cipioun,
Affermeth dremes, and saith that thay been
Warnyng of thinges that men after seen.

And forthermore, I pray yow loketh wel
In the Olde Testament, of Daniel,
If he huld dremes eny vanyté;
Rede eek of Joseph, and ther schal ye see
Whethir dremes ben som tyme (I say nought alle)
Warnyng of thinges that schul after falle.
Lok of Egipt the king, daun Pharao,
His baker and his botiler also,
Whethir thay felte noon effect in dremis.'

He now tries to recover the good graces of his favourite sultana by a method familiar to henpecked husbands, personal flattery: —

'Whan I se the beauté of your face,
Ye ben so scarlet hiew about your eyghen,
It makith al my drede for to deyghen.'

But, by way of quiet retaliation for Partlet's sarcasms, he cites a Latin proverbial saying: *Mulier est hominis confusio,* which he turns into a compliment by this translation: —

'Madame, the sentence of this Latyn is:
Womman is mannes joye and mannes blis.'

He now

fleigh doun fro the beem
For it was day, and eek his hennes alle.
* * * *
He lokith as it were a grim lioun;
And on his toon he rometh up and doun
Him deyned not to set his foot to grounde.
He chukkith, whan he hath a corn i-founde,
And to him rennen than his wifes alle.

The fox seizes him while he is crowing, and the conclusion of the tale is as follows: —

Now, goode men, I pray herkneth alle;
Lo, how fortune torneth sodeinly
The hope and pride eek of her enemy.
This cok that lay upon this foxes bak,
In al his drede, unto the fox he spak,

And saide, 'sire, if that I were as ye,
Yet schuld I sayn, (as wis God helpe me);
'Turneth agein, ye proude cherles alle;
A verray pestilens upon yow falle.
Now am I come unto this woodes syde,
Maugré youre hede, the cok schal heer abyde;
I wol him ete in faith, and that anoon.'
The fox answered, 'in faith, it schal be doon.'
And whil he spak that word, al sodeinly
This cok brak from his mouth delyverly,
And heigh upon a tree he fleigh anoon.
And whan the fox seigh that he was i-goon,
'Allas!' quod he, 'o Chaunteclere, allas!
I have to yow,' quod he, 'y-don trespas,
Inasmoche as I makid you aferd,
Whan I yow hent, and brought out of the yerd;
But, sire, I dede it in no wicked entent;
Com doun, and I schal telle yow what I ment.
I schal say soth to yow, God help me so.'
'Nay than,' quod he, 'I schrew us bothe tuo,
And first I schrew myself, bothe blood and boones,
If thou bigile me any ofter than oones.
Thou schalt no more thurgh thy flaterye,
Do me to synge and wynke with myn ye.
For he that wynkith, whan he scholde see,
Al wilfully, God let him never the!'
'Nay,' quod the fox, 'but God him give meschaunce,
That is so undiscret of governaunce,
That jangleth, when he scholde holde his pees.'

The Knightes Tale, or the Story of Palamon and Arcite, is a favourable instance of Chaucer's manner of dealing with the fables he borrowed from Romance authors. The Knight's Tale is an abridged translation of a part of Boccaccio's Teseide, but with considerable changes in the plan, which is, perhaps, not much improved, and with important additions in the descriptive and the more imaginative portions of the story. These additions are not inferior to the finest parts of Boccaccio's work, and one of them, the description of the Temple of Mars, is particularly interesting, as proving that Chaucer possessed a power of

treating the grand and terrible, of which no modern poet but Dante had yet given an example. The poet here intermixes the comic with the tragic, as actual life, and life's great interpreter, Shakespeare, so often do. Nature smiles through her tears. Isolated events, it is true, are frequently stamped with unmitigated sadness, but human life, as a whole, whether individual or general, is interspersed with ludicrous scenes.

There is some confusion between the description of the edifice itself, and of the paintings upon the walls of it; but it seems to have been a representation, at Thebes, of a temple of Mars in Thrace, with its decorations. One feature of the construction of the temple is very striking, as showing the ghastly character of the light by which the darkness of its interior was made visible:

> The northen light in at the dore schon,
> For wyndow in the walle ne was there noon,
> Thorugh which men might no light discerne.

I suppose the 'northern light' is the aurora borealis, but this phenomenon is so rarely mentioned by mediæval writers, that it may be questioned whether Chaucer meant anything more than the faint and cold illumination received by reflection through the door of an apartment fronting the north.

The views which the poets of classic antiquity and those of the middle ages took of nature, were modified and limited partly by the character of their knowledge of physical law, and partly by the actual connection between natural phenomena and the practical interests of human life. Celestial and meteoric appearances, which neither affected the temperature of the atmosphere and the distribution of rain and snow, nor were regarded as explicable by known law, or as possessing an astrological significance capable of interpretation, appear to have attracted very little attention. In like manner, terrestrial objects, which were not sources of danger or of profit, which neither helped nor hindered material interests, did not in general excite interest enough to stimulate to the closeness of observation which is

necessary to bring out the latent poetry that lies hid under Nature's rudest surfaces. Ignorance of geography and of history smothered the cosmopolite charity which ages of wider instruction and culture have shown, and it is not strange that the Greeks, who regarded every foreigner as a barbarian, entitled to none of the privileges of Hellenic humanity, should have felt no sympathy with those humble creatures which men too selfishly consider as at all times subject to their irresponsible dominion, and as without individual rights and interests of their own. It is difficult to suppose such changes in physical law as the non-appearance of the aurora borealis, during the many centuries which have left no record of this striking phenomenon, would imply; but when we remember that the poetry of Greece and of Rome contains only the fewest, faintest, and most questionable allusions to the phosphoric sparkling of the sea, we may well believe that those who had a hundred times witnessed the coruscation of the northern lights, thought it a meteor too unrelated to the life of man to be worthy of poetic celebration.

Every student of Chaucer, in reading the Squyeres Tale, will share the wish of Milton, that we could—

> Call up him who left half told
> The story of Cambuscan bold,
> Of Camball, and of Algarsife,
> And who had Canace to wife,
> That own'd the virtuous ring of glass,
> And of the wondrous horse of brass
> On which the Tartar king did ride.

This most admirable tale, which is unfortunately unfinished, is the wildest and the most romantic of Chaucer's works. The origin of the fable has not been discovered, and it has been argued that it must have been drawn from an Oriental source; not because any analogon to it is known to exist in Eastern literature, but because it is too little in harmony with the character of European invention to be supposed of Occidental growth. However this may be, the scene and accessories of the

story do not belong to the sphere of Oriental fiction, and the following speculations of the bystanders on the mysterious properties of the brazen horse and the magic mirror, sword and ring, can hardly be other than the work of Chaucer, if not in substance, at least in form and tone:

Greet was the pres that swarmed to and fro
To gauren on this hors that stondeth so;
For it so high was, and so brod and long,
So wel proporcioned to be strong,
Right as it were a steed of Lumbardye;
Therto so horsly, and so quyk of ye,
As if a gentil Poyleys courser were;
For certes, fro his tayl unto his eere
Nature ne art ne couthe him nought amende
In no degré, as al the poepel wende.
But evermore her moste wonder was,
How that it couthe goon, and was of bras;
It was of fayry, as the poeple semed.
Diverse peple diversly they demed;
As many hedes, as many wittes been.
They murmured, as doth a swarm of been,
And made skiles after her fantasies,
Rehersyng of the olde poetries,
And seyden it was i-like the Pagasé,
The hors that hadde wynges for to fle,
Or elles it was the Grekissch hors Synon,
That broughte Troye to destruccioun,
As men may in the olde gestes rede.
'Myn hert,' quod oon, 'is evermore in drede,
I trow som men of armes ben therinne,
That schapen hem this cité for to wynne;
It were good that such thing were knowe.'
Another rowned to his felaw lowe,
And sayde: 'It lyth, for it is rather lik
An apparence maad by some magik,
As jogelours playen at this festes grete.'
Of sondry thoughtes thus they jangle and trete,
As lewed peple demeth comunly
Of thinges that ben maad more subtily

Than they can in her lewednes comprehende,
They deemen gladly to the badder ende.
And som of hem wondred on the mirrour,
That born was up into the maister tour,
How men might in it suche thinges se.
Another answerd, and sayd, it might wel be
Naturelly by composiciouns
Of angels, and of heigh reflexiouns; *
And sayde that in Rome was such oon.
They speeke of Alhazen and Vitilyon,
And Aristotle, that writen in her lyves
Of queynte myrrours and prospectyves,
As knowen they that han her bokes herd.
And other folk have wondred on the swerd,
That wolde passe thorughout everything;
And fel in speche of Telophus the kyng,
And of Achilles for his queynte spere,
For he couthe with it bothe hele and dere,
Right in such wise as men may with the swerd,
Of which right now ye have your selven herd.
They speeken of sondry hardyng of metal,
And speken of medicines therwithal,
And how and whan it schulde harded be,
Which is unknowe algat unto me.
Tho speeken they of Canacees ryng,
And seyden alle, that such a wonder thing
Of craft of rynges herd they never noon,
Sauf that he Moyses and kyng Salamon

* This reasoning reminds one of the popular explanation of table-turning and other kindred mysteries. Persons who cannot detect the trick, and are afraid of being suspected of a superstitious belief in the supernatural character of the phenomenon, if they honestly confess their inability to solve the problem, take refuge in 'science,' and ascribe the alleged facts to *electricity*, though the known powers of that agent are as inadequate to furnish a rationale of the extraordinary gyrations and saltations which bewitched tables, chairs and other household gear are affirmed to execute, as are

'composiciouns
Of angels [angles], and heigh reflexiouns,'

to explain the properties of the Tartar's magic mirror.

Men love to cheat themselves with hard words, and indolence often accepts the *name* of a phenomenon as a substitute for the *reason* of it.

Hadden a name of connyng in such art.
Thus seyen the peple, and drawen hem apart.
But natheles som seiden that it was
Wonder thing to make of ferne aisschen glas,
And yit is glas nought like aisschen of ferne,
But for they han i-knowen it so ferne;
Therfor cesseth her janglyng and her wonder.
As sore wondred som of cause of thonder,
On ebbe and flood, on gossomer, and on myst,
And on alle thing, til that the cause is wist.
Thus janglen they, and demen and devyse,
Til that the kyng gan fro his bord arise.

Two other tales are invested with a good deal of critical interest, by the fact that they are generally supposed to have been taken, though with important modifications, from Gower's Confessio Amantis, which is believed to have been published while Chaucer was engaged upon the Canterbury Tales. But Gower appears to have invented nothing, and as not only the incidents but the plots of both tales are found in more ancient forms, it is more probable that the two poets borrowed them from a common source than that one of them, even before the days of copyright, should, without acknowledgement, have plagiarized from a friend and contemporary of his own nation. Either would, no doubt, have made free use of foreign authors, and of those popular legends which had for centuries floated about the world, and were fairly to be regarded as *nullius filii*, common property, to which possession was a sufficient title; but Chaucer cannot be convicted of 'conveying' anything that was rightfully Gower's, without stronger evidence than the resemblance between these stories. Indeed there is, in Gower's diction, some internal evidence that the story of Constance is a translation from the French, such, for example, as the use of *environe* as an adverb, in the French sense of *nearly*, *about*, as:

Within a ten mile *environe*,

within *about* ten miles.* Other instances to the same purpose might be cited; but when we consider the intimate relations of the two languages, and the uncertainty of the boundary between them at that period, it must be admitted that such evidence is worth little.

The leading incidents of the stories are the same in both authors, but in Chaucer's version, have, in general, more minuteness of detail, though it is observable that where Gower is the most circumstantial, Chaucer is the most concise; and in his treatment of the tales there are many passages, where there is an appearance of artificial condensation and abridgement of the narrative as related by Gower, and a studied neglect of circumstances not wholly uninteresting in themselves, but, at the same time, not essential to the conduct of the story.

Gower's work had been recently published, and was fresh in the memory of those for whom Chaucer was writing; hence it is highly probable that these variations were introduced for the express purpose of giving a new tone and character to histories, the leading circumstances of which were already familiar. A stanza in Chaucer's version of the Man of Lawes Tale, or the History of Constance, is particularly curious, because, as some of Chaucer's critics have suggested, it is evidently designed as a criticism upon Gower's treatment of an incident in the story. In both narratives, King Alla, a Saxon king, visiting Rome as a pilgrim, invites the Emperor of Rome to dine with him. In Gower, Morice, the son of King Alla, is sent to an imperial country residence, to deliver the invitation. Gower thus expresses this:—

> This emperour out of the towne,
> Within a ten mile environe,
> Where as it thought him for the beste
> Hath sondry places for to reste,

* *Enviroun* is used in the same way in the Libel of English Policy, a poem of the following century, which will be noticed hereafter, and by Lydgate, but I have not observed it in any work of Gower's time.

And as fortune wolde it tho
He was dwellend at one of tho.
The King Allee forth with thassent
Of Custe his wife hath thider sent
Morice his sone, as he was taught,
To the emperour, and he goth straught
And in his fader halve he sought
As he, whiche his lordship sought,
That of his highe worthinesse
He wolde do so greet mekenesse,
His owne town to come and se,
And yive a time in the citee,
So that his fader might him gete,
That he wolde ones with him ete.

This did not suit Chaucer's more courtly notions of the respect and deference due from even a king to so exalted and sacred a personage as the Emperor of Rome, and he makes King Alla present the invitation in person, censuring at the same time Gower's version of the story, thus:

Som men wold seye, how that his child Maurice
Doth his message unto the emperour:
But, as I gesse, Alla was nat so nyce,
To him that is so soverayn of honour,
As he that is of Cristes folk the flour,
Sent eny child, but it is best to deeme
He went himsilf, and so it may wel seme.

There is, upon the whole, no doubt that Chaucer's is the later production, and, though it is a more finished performance than that of Gower, it is somewhat injured by the intentional omission of circumstances which are used not without effect in Gower's version, but which Chaucer dropped, in order that the coincidence between the two might not be too close.

The other narrative which has been thought to be borrowed from the Confessio Amantis, is the Wyf of Bathes Tale. The dialect of this story, as given by Gower, varies considerably from that of the rest of his poem, as it is older in structure, and contains several obsolete words which Gower does not elsewhere

employ. It is therefore, in all probability, an adaptation of a more ancient tale, in which the incidents, and in part the language, are preserved. In Chaucer's version there is the same manifest intention of departing from Gower as in the story of Constance, and it is in this tale that he enforces, in the person of the old dame, the opinions concerning the true test of gentle rank, which he had formerly interpolated into his translation of the Romaunt of the Rose. No such opinions are expressed by Gower, or, so far as I know, by any older English or French author, and they are no doubt Chaucer's own.*

Gower was a contemporary of the author of Piers Ploughman, and of Wycliffe as well as of Chaucer. He is known to English readers by the long poem styled the Confessio Amantis, or Lover's Confession. The reputation of Gower, which was, for a long time, above his merits, seems to be in some measure due to his connection with Chaucer, though he did not entertain

* A remarkable form of expression, which occurs in verse 3098 of the Romaunt of the Rose, and which I do not remember to have observed elsewhere in Chaucer's works, deserves special notice —

> 'Say boldely thy will' (quod he)
> 'I nill be wroth, if that I may,
> For nought that thou shalt to me say.'

The meaning of the phrase, 'if that I may,' here is: if I can *not-be* wroth; if I can refrain from being wroth. I find an analogous phrase in Paul Louis Courier, Pamphlets Politiques, Seconde Lettre Particulière: 'Vous ne saurez rien cette fois; pas un mot, nulle nouvelle; pour vous punir, *je veux ne vous rien dire, si je puis.*' I will *not-tell* you anything, if I can.'

In both these passages, the determination, in the mind of the speaker, *not-to-do* the thing in question, or to refrain from it, is conceived to be so strong, that it has ceased to be a mere negation, and has assumed the form of a proposition logically positive.

In Chaucer, the coalescent negative verb, *nill*, gives the expression a force which Courier could not attain to; for in languages where a negative verbal form exists, the negation is more energetic than when a separate particle is used. The Latin nolo, the English *I nill*, are a species of affirmative, which means more than non volo, *I will not* — the absence of a volition — and, on the contrary, implies a strong volition in the opposite direction. Courier felt this, and therefore he does not use the negative verb, *je ne veux*, but he puts the expression of *will* in an affirmative form: *je veux*, and connects the negative with the act: *ne-vous-rien-dire.*

the views of reform which Chaucer shared with the other great writers of that century whom we have just named. His literary inferiority is perhaps to be ascribed to the very fact that he did not possess the manly independence and moral courage of Wycliffe and of Chaucer, and was unable to shake off the feeling of deference to traditional authority, which in all ages has proved so generally fatal to originality in productive intellectual effort.

Many of Gower's works are in Latin, and the only one which is generally accessible is the Confessio Amantis, an English poem, written, as the author declares, at the request of King Richard II. In a proem which was suppressed in the copies issued after Richard's deposition, he thus states the motive and occasion of the composition of this work:

> I thenke and have it understonde,
> As it befell upon a tide,
> As thing, which shulde tho betide,
> Under the town of newe Troy,
> Which toke of Brute his firste joy,
> In Themse, whan it was flowend,
> As I by bote came rowend,
> So as fortune her time sette,
> My lege lord perchaunce I mette,
> And so befell as I came nigh,
> Out of my boote, whan he me sigh,
> He bad me come into his barge.
> And whan I was with him at large,
> Amonges other thinges said,
> He hath this charge upon me laid,
> And bad me do my besinesse,
> That to his highe worthynesse
> Some newe thing I shulde boke,
> That he himself it mighte loke
> After the forme of my writing.

The language of this last couplet would seem to imply that, though we have Froissart's testimony to the fact that the King knew French, he was ignorant of Latin, and desired to have

something from the pen of Gower, which he could read by himself, without the aid of an interpreter. He resolved to comply with the royal command, and, because

men sain, and sothe it is,
That who that al of wisdom writ,
It dulleth ofte a mannes wit,
To hem that shall it alday rede,

to produce something of a less grave and severe cast than his former works; to —

go the middel wey,
And write a boke betwene the twey,
Somewhat of lust, somewhat of lore.
* * * *
And for that fewe men endite
In oure englisshe, I thenke make
A boke for King Richardes sake.
* * * *
To make a boke after his heste,
And write in such a maner wise,
Which may be wisdome to the wise,
And play to hem that list to play.

The title of the poem, The Lover's Confession, indicates its general subject, which is a consultation, in the form of a confession, between an unsuccessful lover and an experienced counsellor. The prologue is devoted to an exposure of the evils of the time, in which the schism in the church is alluded to, as the cause of the social wrongs of the age, and of the corruptions of the clergy, including, of course,

This newe secte of lollardie.

The prologue is much superior to the rest of the work, though certainly not very appropriate to the poem. The author seems to have written it with the view of covertly giving the king some useful suggestions, by pointing out existing abuses, and hinting at the remedy. He speaks of himself and his general purpose thus:

I which am a borel clerke
Purpose for to write a boke
After the worlde, that whilom toke
Long time in olde daies passed.
But for men sain it is now lassed
In worse plight than it was tho,
I thenke for to touche also
The world, which neweth every day,
So as I can, so as I may.
Though I sikenesse have upon honde
And longe have had, yet wol I fonde
To write and do my besinesse,
That in some part so as I gesse
The wise man may ben advised.

The following *laudatio temporis acti* is a fair specimen of the general tone of the prologue: —

If I shall drawe into my minde
The time passed, than I finde
The world stode in al his welthe,
Tho was the life of man in helthe,
Tho was plente, tho was richesse,
Tho was the fortune of prowesse,
Tho was knighthode in pris by name,
Wherof the wide worldes fame
Write in croniques is yet witholde.
Justice of lawe tho was holde,
The privelege of regalie
Was sauf, and all the baronie
Worshiped was in his estate.
The citees knewen no debate,
The people stode in obeisaunce
Under the reule of governaunce,
And pees with rightwisnesse keste,
With charite tho stode in reste,
Of mannes herte the corage
Was shewed than in the visage.
The word was liche to the conceipte,
Without semblaunt of deceipte,
Tho was there unenvied love,

Tho was vertue set above,
And vice was put under fote.
Now stant the crope under the rote,
The worlde is chaunged overall,
And therof moste in speciall
That love is falle into discorde.
And that I take to recorde
Of every lond for his partie
The comun vois, which may nought lie,
Nought upon one, but upon alle.
It is that men now clepe and calle
And sain, that regnes ben devided,
In stede of love is hate guided,
The werre wol no pees purchace,
And lawe hath take her double face,
So that justice out of the wey
With rightwisnesse is gone awey.
And thus to loke on every halve,
Men sene the sore without salve,
Whiche al the worlde hath overtake.
Ther is no regne of alle out take,
For every climat hath his dele
After the torninge of the whele,
Which blinde fortune overthroweth,
Wherof the certain no man knoweth,
The heven wot what is to done.

At the commencement of the action, the author, in the character of a despairing lover, wanders alone in a forest, and offers a prayer to Venus, who makes her appearance and refers the suppliant to her priest, for counsel and consolation. After an exhortation from this father confessor, the penitent begins his shrift, which is chiefly in the form of answers to questions, Venus's priest being evidently partial to the Socratic method of argument. The counsels and comforts of the confessor consist principally of narratives, from ancient as well as mediæval legendary lore, which have generally little application to the immediate subject. These are mainly, if not altogether, translations, or rather metrical paraphrases, from classical as well as

later Latin authors, and are executed with very moderate skill, whether considered as versions or as adaptations. Of original imaginative power, the poem shows not the slightest trace, and its principal merit lies in the sententious passages, which are here and there interspersed, and which, whether borrowed or original, are often pithy and striking. In his earlier works, Gower had employed Latin and French altogether. It is generally supposed that he adopted English as the language of the Confessio Amantis in consequence of the success of Chaucer's poem in the vernacular; but I think the lines I have already quoted authorise us to believe that English was selected in compliance with the wish of the monarch, at whose request the work was undertaken.

Of Gower's principal French work, the Speculum Meditantis, no copy is known to be in existence, but there are extant about fifty French amatory ballads composed by him in imitation of Provenzal models, but which seem to exhibit no special merit in invention or in style.

In one of these, he apologises for his want of command of French, as an Englishman, and it is remarkable that, if he was conscious of any deficiency in this respect, he should not have resorted to English until a late period of his life.* It is not improbable, as has been often suggested, that certain passages in the prologue to Chaucer's prose Testament of Love, condemning the use of French by native English writers, may have been aimed at Gower. 'There ben some,' says he, 'that speke their poysy mater in Frenche, of whyche speche the Frenche men have as good a fantasye, as we have in hearing of Frenche mennes Englysshe.' 'Let then clerks endyten in

* Al universite de tout le monde
Johan Gower ceste balade envoie,
Et si jeo nai de françois la faconde,
Pardonetz moi qe jeo de ceo forsvoie.
Jeo sui Englois si quier par tiele voie
Estre excuse mais quoique nulls endic,
Lamour parfit en dieu se justifie.

Latyn, for they have the propertye of science, and the knowinge in that facultye; and lette Frenchmen in theyr Frenche also endyte theyr queynt termes, for it is kyndly to theyr mouthes; and let *us* shewe our fantasyes in suche wordes as we lerned of our dames tonge.'*

Gower certainly survived Chaucer, but was probably born before him. His English is philologically older, both in vocabulary and in grammatical structure, than that of Chaucer, though younger in both respects than the dialect of Piers Ploughman. Pauli ascribes his frequent use of French words to his habit of composing in that language, but his vocabulary does not differ essentially in this respect from those of Langlande, Chaucer, and other authors of their time; and I see no reason for believing that his dialect was more affected by Romance influences than the common written language of the age in which he lived.

The metre of the Confessio Amantis is the octosyllabic, of four iambuses, besides the superfluous syllable which often makes what is called a feminine rhyme. In point of rhythm and metre, Gower's versification is smooth, though less melodious than that of Chaucer, and his rhymes are inartificial, the same word, or the same entire syllable, being repeated for the consonance, without scruple. This peculiarity is also observable in his French ballads. The conjugation of the verb is varied to suit the convenience of the poet, with little regard to the Saxon distinction of strong and weak inflection, or to what appears to have been the common usage of his age. He also confounds the affirmative particles *yea* and *yes*, at least accord-

* This passage and that before referred to are not the only ones in which Chaucer appears to censure his brother poet; for the condemnation he passes, in the prologue to the Man of Lawes Tale, on the immorality of the stories of Canace and of Apollonius of Tyre, both of which are found in the Confessio Amantis, is understood by Tyrwhitt and other critics to have been designed to apply to Gower. It is much to be lamented that Chaucer himself should have polluted his own greatest work with such shocking grossness and licentiousness as many of his tales exhibit.

† See First Series, Lecture I. p. 22.

ing to Pauli's text; but this may be the fault of editors and printers, for in Gower's time no English idiom was better established than this distinction. In fact, though not without power as a sententious thinker, Gower gives little evidence of artistic skill, or of the possession of any of the higher attributes of the poet.

Philologically speaking, Gower is, as I have already remarked, older than Chaucer, though his first English work was not composed until the reputation of Chaucer, as a great original and national poet, was established. The difference, however, in this respect, is in degree rather than in kind, and as it consists more in the tone, and in a negative want of the life and freshness and accuracy of Chaucer's English, it is not easy to specify its peculiarities. I may however mention, in addition to the irregularity in verbal inflection already noticed, the more frequent use of the participial termination in *-end*, which marks the true distinction between the present participle and the verbal noun in *-ing*—a distinction, which, as was observed in a former lecture, became obsolete in English in the latter part of the fourteenth century, though kept up long afterwards in the Scottish dialect. There are, so far as I have been able to observe, no improvements of diction or style in Gower, which had not been as well, or better, exemplified by Chaucer; and in these particulars the latter must be considered the master of the former. Skelton and those who have copied him are therefore in error in saying that—'Gower first garnished our English rude,' for most of Chaucer's works are older than the Confessio Amantis, and Gower himself makes Venus style Chaucer 'her poet,' and say that—

> in the floures of his youth,
> In sundry wise, as he well couth,
> Of dittees and of songes glade,
> The which he for my sake made,
> The lond fulfilled is over all.

This, of course, implies that Chaucer's poems had already

acquired a wide circulation before Gower wrote in English verse at all.

The Confessio Amantis, then, did not directly aid in enlarging the vocabulary or improving the syntax of English; and it did not introduce new metrical forms or enrich the poetical diction. But it was useful in diffusing a knowledge of the new literary tongue, in familiarizing the English speech as a written language to those whose proper heritage it was—but who had been taught alien accents by a foreign nurse—thus giving to it its just and lawful predominance in the land where it was cradled, and had now grown to a strong and luxuriant adolescence.

Gower was rather an imitator of Chaucer than the creator of his own literary style; but his works, as being of a higher moral tone, or at least of higher moral pretensions, and at the same time, of less artificial refinement, were calculated to reach and influence a somewhat larger class than that which would be attracted by the poems of Chaucer, and, consequently, they seem to have had a wider circulation. The name of Chaucer does not, I believe, occur in the works of Shakespeare; but the play of Pericles—which, though its authorship is disputed, was published in Shakespeare's own time as a work of his composition—is avowedly formed on the story of Apollinus, Prince of Tyre, in the Confessio Amantis; and Gower himself is introduced by name into the play, and performs the office of the chorus of the ancient drama. There is no doubt that the poem of Gower, however inferior to the works of his master, was much esteemed in his lifetime, and still enjoyed a high reputation in ages when Chaucer was almost forgotten. But posterity has reversed the judgement of its immediate predecessors, and though Gower will long be read, he will never again dispute the palm of excellence with the true father of English literature.

In taking leave of the great authors of the fourteenth century, I ought perhaps to apologise for devoting so large a portion of this brief course to the dialect and the literature of that period. But I am convinced that the importance of Langlande and

Wycliffe and Chaucer to all subsequent English philology and intellectual effort, though long vaguely recognised, is not yet appreciated and understood. Nor shall we be able to estimate their relative place and just significance in our literary history, until still more of the forgotten authorship of that and the preceding centuries shall be brought to light, and linguistic science, as applied to the English tongue, be much further advanced than it now is, or, without increased facilities of investigation, can be.

From the corruption of original texts through the ignorance or arrogance of those who transcribed them, it is evident that we can ascertain the grammatical system of particular writers of the period we are discussing only by the examination of authors' copies. This renders the publication of such, whenever they can be discovered, a matter of great interest and importance. If, indeed, the manuscript of the earliest version of the Old Testament, which is ascribed to Hereford, is really his own, the value attached to such originals might well seem exaggerated, for it would be clear that one important authority was not to be reconciled with itself. Not only does the latter portion of that translation differ from the earlier in its inflectional system, but in the books which come last in the manuscript, the grammar is, in many points, more archaic than in the books which precede them in the copy, and which therefore, presumably, were first executed. Doubtless, the paleographical evidence is decisive as to the identity of the handwriting in the historical books and the Prophets. But it is a long step from this question to that of the authorship of the manuscript, and even the opinion of the very learned and conscientious editors of the Wycliffite translations cannot outweigh the internal evidence to the contrary, unless supported by strong external testimony. Until such proof is adduced, we are at liberty to believe that the manuscript ascribed to Hereford is not an original, but a copy of a version by at least two different translators, who adopted different systems of accidence.

The original manuscript of a translation of Higden's Polychronicon by Trevisa, a contemporary of Chaucer, is said, upon I know not what authority, to be still extant, and is now in course of publication. Trevisa is reported to have translated the whole or a part of the Bible into English, and the publication of the chronicle may throw some light on his connection with the Wycliffite versions, and thus contribute to elucidate some very important questions in the history of the language and history of England.*

The zeal and activity of British scholarship are fast rescuing the remaining sibylline leaves of old English literature from destruction, and a few years more will prepare the way for the crowning labour in the early philology of England — a worthy edition of the worthiest of her ancient poets, the immortal Chaucer.

In the meantime, though the texts of the authors upon whom I have dwelt so long present many prosodical and grammatical problems which cannot yet be solved, they are all perfectly accessible, and, so far as the general purposes of literary culture and literary criticism require, intelligible. By the help of the notes and glossaries which accompany the recent editions of old English writers, from Layamon and the Ormulum to Langlande, Wycliffe, Chaucer and Gower, every one of them may be easily read, without preparatory study, and a great familiarity with their dialect may be acquired at less cost of time and labour than are needed to learn to spell out, by help of dictionary and grammar, a page of French or German.

But, like the traveller, who, absorbed by the fair proportions of a Grecian portico and the living sculptures of its pediment, forgets to explore the interior of the temple, I have lingered too long about the vestibule, and must now hasten to pass through the darkened corridors which lead to the still more sacred portions of the magnificent structure.

* See Longer Notes and Illustrations, V. at the end of this lecture.

LONGER NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

I.

SIGNIFICANCE OF INDIVIDUAL WORDS.

The shallowness of popular English and American criticism is nowhere more glaringly manifested than in the extravagant commendations which have been bestowed on some modern dictionary-makers, as philosophical expositors and discriminators of words.

Lexicographers are under a constant temptation to save themselves labour by building on the foundation of their predecessors, and to study dictionaries, not literature. They thus acquire the habit of regarding words as completely significant individuals, and they are prone to multiply descriptions, to make distinctions where no difference exists, and especially to ascribe to single vocables meanings which belong, either to entire phraseological combinations, grammatical agglutinations so to speak, or to a different member of the phrase from that to which they assign them. Hence their definitions are too diffuse, and often so much embarrassed by conditions and qualifications as to smother the radical idea of the word altogether, or to confine it to a special sense which it only accidentally possesses, instead of giving it a general expression, which admits of the protean variety of shade and extension, that, in cultivated languages, belongs to almost all words, except names of visible objects, and mere terms of art whose signification is not organically developed from the root, but arbitrarily and conventionally imposed upon it. In studying the definitions of the dictionaries which pass for the best in this respect, we find that there was in the mind of the lexicographer not a clearness of distinction, but a confusion of thought arising from the habit of incessantly poring on word-lists, and constantly contemplating individual terms isolated from those connections and relations which alone can breathe into them a living spirit, and make them anything but unelastic and inert matter.

It is futile to attempt to make that absolute which is, in its nature, relative and conditional, to formulate that which in itself does not constitute an individual and complete idea, to make technical definition a mouthpiece for words which ought to be allowed to speak for themselves by exemplification, and to petrify them into a rigidity of form irreconcilable with that play of feature which is so essential to life-like expressiveness. Dictionary-definitions, considered as a means of philo-

logical instruction, are as inferior to miscellaneous reading as a hortus-siccus to a botanic garden. Words, with the exception above stated, exert their living powers, and give utterance to sentiment and meaning, only in the organic combinations for which nature has adapted them, and not in the alphabetic single-file in which lexicographers post and drill them. The signification of the vocabulary belonging to the higher workings of the mind and heart depends on the context, and therefore these words have almost as many shades of meaning as they have possible combinations with other words in periods and phrases. These shades can only be perceived and apprehended by a wide familiarity with the literature which presents verbal combinations in all their variety; and all that a dictionary can do is to give the general meaning of the vocable and illustrate its changeable hues by exemplification of its most important uses. There does not exist a dictionary of any language, living or dead, whose definitions are to be considered evidence as to the exact meaning of words. The best dictionary of any living language yet executed is unquestionably that of the German by the brothers Grimm, now in course of publication. These great philologists do not attempt formal definition at all. They give the nearest corresponding Latin equivalent, and a brief general indication of the meaning of the word, but leave the student to gather the precise signification or significations from the exemplifications. Richardson's valuable English dictionary gives no definitions. A dictionary is but an index to the literature of a given speech; or rather it bears to language the relation which a digest bears to a series of legal reports. Neither is an *authority*; and he is but a sorry lawyer who cites the one, an indifferent scholar who quotes the other, as such.

II.

OBSOLETE ANGLO-SAXON WORDS.

In Illustration I. to Lecture III. I have given a list of many Anglo-Saxon words derived from the three roots, hyge or hige, mind or thought; mod, mind, passion, irritability, wit, genius, intellect, sense; and ge-thanc, mind, thought, opinion. Of these, hyge and its score of derivations are all obsolete. Of the equally numerous progeny of mod, there remain only *mood*, *moodily*, *moodiness*, *moody*, *mad*. The thirty Anglo-Saxon words derived from wit are reduced to less than half a dozen, though we have formed several new compounds and derivations from the same root. From ge-thanc, we have a larger

number, but many of them are of modern formation, and most of the Anglo-Saxon derivatives from this root are obsolete. The preface to Alfred's Boethius cited in Illustration IV. Lecture III. contains, exclusive of repetitions and various forms and inflections of the same vocable, about seventy words. Of these, the following important ones are obsolete: æmetta, *leisure* (from the same root as the adjective *empty*), andget or andgit, *sense, meaning*, and its derivative, andgitfullicost; earfod, *hard*; biddan, though extant with the meaning of *to command*, has become obsolete in the religious sense of *to pray*, where a Romance word has supplanted it; gereccan, to *express, render*, or *tell*; healsian, *to beseech* or *implore*, though still used as a salutation in the religious and poetic dialect, and in the sense *to call to*, in that of navigation; hwilum, dat. pl. of the noun hwil, *sometimes*, obsolete in English, but, in the form *whiles*, extant in Scotch, and sometimes used in English, jocosely, in the form *whilom*; our adverb *while* or *whilst* is the same word with a different meaning; leden, *speech, language*, used by Chaucer but now lost; lichoman, *body*; mæd, *measure*, obsolete as a noun, though *mete*, verb, is used in the solemn style, and *mete*, adjective, may be allied, but this is doubtful; mod, *mind*, obsolete in this sense; ongitan, *to understand*, cognate with andget; rice, *kingdom*; the modern *rich* is from the same root; rime, *number*, extant only in *rhyme*, mistakenly supposed to be from the Greek. The coincidence between rim and Greek ἀριθμός is noticeable; mistlic, not cognate with *mix*, but a compound of mis and lic, *un-like*, and hence *various*; spell, *language*, obsolete in this and many other Anglo-Saxon meanings; sweotol *plain, clear*; swiðe, *very*; underfon, *to undertake, assume, receive*; wealhstod, *translator*; wendan, the source of our to *wend*, but obsolete in the sense *to turn*; witan, *to blame*, but the verb *to twit* is from this root, and derived either from the compound ædwitan, edwitan, ætwitan, or possibly from the gerundial to witenne, he is to witenne, *he is to blame*.*

It is true that some of the words I have mentioned were still in use

* The revisors of the English Bible of 1611 sacrificed a genuine Saxon-English idiom when, in Galatians ii. 11, they wrote: *he was to be blamed*, for: *he was to blame*. It is remarkable that even Tyndale did not dare to use this latter form, which, in his ignorance of Anglo-Saxon, he probably took for a vulgar colloquialism; but the truer philological instinct of Shakespeare did not scruple to retain the phrase.

We have still several corresponding idioms. Franklin's 'hats to sell' is an instance, and: 'it is to seek' has not been long disused. This form occurs also in Dutch, and it is curious that in the phrase: te zoek zijn, *to be wanting, to be to seek*, the verb te zoeken has dropped the old ending en, as in English.

in Chaucer's time, but much the greater proportion of them had been already irrecoverably lost, and hence, independently of the direct testimony of the monuments of early English letters, it is evident that the language must have become comparatively poor in all its higher departments. The vocabulary of the printed literature of the thirteenth century consists of about 8,000 words, of which not far from 7,000 are Anglo-Saxon. Rejecting words of foreign origin, and what are obviously different forms of the same vocable, Bosworth's Anglo-Saxon Dictionary contains something less than twice the latter number. Neither Coleridge nor Bosworth can be supposed to be complete; but if we assume that the one is as nearly so as the other, it would follow that one-half of the total Anglo-Saxon vocabulary had been lost before the year 1300. But as Coleridge's Glossarial Index is confined to printed books, and Bosworth embraces most known Anglo-Saxon manuscripts, his list is probably considerably more exhaustive than that of Coleridge. Between the year 1300 and Chaucer's time, there was, doubtless, some further loss, and, upon the whole, I think it quite safe to say that at least one-fourth, and in all probability one-third, of the words composing the Anglo-Saxon tongue were utterly forgotten before Chaucer had written a line. It further appears, from the character of the particular words which I have shown to have been lost, that the moral and intellectual, and the poetical nomenclatures were the portions of the vocabulary which had suffered most, and hence that a new supply of terms in these departments was an imperious necessity for all the purposes of literary culture.

III.

CHAUCER'S ADDITIONS TO THE ROMAN DE LA ROSE.

Sandras, Etude sur Chaucer, p. 38, in speaking of Chaucer's translation of the Roman de la Rose, observes: 'Nulle intention de donner au Roman de la Rose une couleur nationale, nulle intention de l'embellir ou de le corriger. Les différences qu'une comparaison scrupuleuse peut découvrir sont insignifiantes, et ce qu'on a pris pour des interpolations se lit dans les manuscrits complets.' For one who has had no opportunity of consulting 'les manuscrits complets,' it is difficult to judge how far they sustain this broad statement; but the passage referred to in the text, which I think few readers would regard as 'insignificant,' is not found either in Méon's edition of the text of De Lorris, or in the Dutch translation published by Kausler in Vol. II. of his Denkmäler Altniederländischer Sprache und Litteratur.

The entire passage in Méon's edition of the French text, vol. i. pp. 83, 84, stands thus: —

2086. Vilonnie premierement,
Ce dist Amors, veil et commant
Que tu guerpisses sans reprendre,
Se tu ne veulz vers moi mesprendre;
2090. Si maudi et escommenie
Tous ceus qui aiment vilonnie.
Vilonnie fait li vilains,
Por ce n'est pas drois que ge l'ains;
Viloins est fel et sans pitié,
2095. Sans servise et sans amitié.
Après, te garde de retraire
Chose des gens qui face à taire:
N'est pas proesce de mesdire, &c. &c.

Chaucer's interpolation, it will be seen, is introduced between verses 2095 and 2096. In the Dutch translation the passage is as follows: —

2006. Ic verbiede hu, alle dorperheide
Te loechene eewelijc sonder hale,
Vp dat ghi mi wilt dienen wale.
Ic ghebanne ende doe bekinnen:
Dorperhede, alle die minne[n]
Van hem te doene, verstaet mie;
Dorpre no dorpernie ne gaerdic nie,
Want si fel zijn ende sonder ghenade,
In hem te hebben valschen rade;
Te niemene dracht hi minne
So quaderande van zinne.
Wacht hu mede, dat ghi niet vertrect
Dinghen, die willen zijn bedect,
Ende te heelne, dat te heelne staet;
En es ghcene meesterie te seggen quaet, etc. etc.

This translation is probably older than that of Chaucer, and is a fair one, though I cannot agree with Kausler, that it 'kann, als Uebertragung betrachtet, für meisterhaft gelten und darf sich dem Chaucer'schen Versuche kühn an die Seite stellen.'

The omission of what I have called an interpolation of Chaucer's, in both Méon's text and in this old Dutch version, is certainly primâ-facie evidence that it is an addition by the English translator; and we have a right to call upon those who affirm that his supposed amplifi-

cations of his original are all found in the best manuscripts, to produce their texts of this passage.

I take this occasion to call the attention of English scholars to the great interest of this Dutch translation, and, in fact, of the general Netherlandish literature of the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries, which, it is hardly extravagant to say, is as little known to English and American scholars as that of China. I question whether there is any cognate source of instruction upon early English philology and etymology, which, if properly worked, would yield a richer harvest.

The translation in question does not conform so closely to Méon's text as does that of Chaucer, but some passages, where Chaucer followed a different reading from that text, correspond pretty nearly with the Dutch. Thus, in this passage: —

21. Within my twentie yeere of age,
When that love taketh his courage
Of younge folke, I wente soone
To bed, as I was wont to doone:
And fast I slept, and in sleeping
Me mette such a swevening,
That liked me wondrous wele,
But in that sweven is never a dele
That it n' is afterward befall,
Right as this dreame woll tell us all.

Méon's text of the first five verses of the corresponding passage is: —

Où vintiesme an de mon aage,
Où point qu'Amors prend le paage
Des jones gens, couchiez estoie
Une nuit, si cum je souloie,
Et me dormoie moult forment, etc. etc.

The Dutch: —

Te minen rechten xx jaren,
Alse minne neemt te waren
Van ionghen lieden haren cheins,
So lach ic in een groet ghepeins
Vp mijn bedde, ende wart beuaen
Met eenen slape also zaen, etc. etc.

Chaucer here uses *soone* in the sense of *early* in the evening — a meaning mentioned by Gill, as I have noted in my First Series, Lecture XXV. p. 580 — and the Dutch zaen, in the last line above

quoted, corresponds nearly enough to render it highly probable that both translators followed a text different from that of Méon, which does not contain the same idea. It is singular that the word *courage* or *corage*, in the second line quoted from Chaucer, should have been so generally misunderstood. It is, as I have pointed out in a note on the word *courage* in the American edition of the first volume of Wedgwood's Etymological Dictionary, the Low-Latin coraagium or coragium, prestationis species, a *due* or *tribute*, as is clearly shown both by the French paage and the Dutch cheins.

IV.

A SERMON AGAINST MIRACLE-PLAYS.

Knowe ȝee, Cristen men, that as Crist God and man is bothe weye, trewth, and lif, as seith the gospel of Jon, weye to the errynge, trewth to the unknowyng and doutyng, lif to the strynge to hevene and weryinge, so Crist dude nothinge to us but effectuely in weye of mercy, in treuthe of ritwesnes, and in lif of ȝildyng everlastynge joye for oure continuely morning and sorwynge in this valey of teeres. In myraclis therfore that Crist dude heere in erthe, outher in hymsilf outher in hise seyntis, weren so efectuel and in ernest done, that to synful men that erren thei brouȝten forȝyvenesse of synne, settynge hem in the weye of riȝt beleve; to doutouse men not stedefast, thei brouȝten in kunnying to betere plesen God and verry hope in God to been stedefast in hym; and to the wery of the weye of God, for the grette penaunce and suffraunce of the trybulacioun that men moten have therinne, thes brouȝten in love of brynnynge charité, to the whiche alle thing is liȝt, and he to suffere dethe, the whiche men most dreden, for the everlastynge lyf and joye that men moste loven and disiren, of the whiche thing verry hope puttith awey alle werinesse heere in the weye of God. Thanne sythen myraclis of Crist and of hyse seyntis weren thus effectuel, as by oure bileve we ben in certeyn, no man shulde usen in bourde and pleye the myraclis and werkis that Crist so ernystfully wrouȝte to oure helye; for whoevere so doth, he errith in the byleve, reversith Crist, and scornyth God. He errith in the bileve, for in that he takith the most precious werkis of God in pley and bourde, and so takith his name in idil, and so mysusith oure bileve. A! Lord! sythen an erthely servaunt dar not taken in pley and in bourde that that her erthely lord takith in ernest, myche more we shulden not maken oure pleye and bourde of tho

myraclis and werkis that God so ernestfully wrouȝt to us; for sothely whan we so done, drede to synne is taken awey, as a servaunt whan he bourdith with his mayster leesith his drede to offendyn hym, namely, whanne he bourdith with his mayster in th t nd that his mayster takith in ernest.

. . . . . .

An half frynde tariere to soule helthe, redy to excusen the yvil and hard of bileve, with Thomas of Ynde, seith, that he wil not leevyn the forseyd sentense of myraclis pleyinge, but and men schewen it hym bi holy writt opynly and by oure bileve. Wherfore that his half frenschip may be turnyd to the hoole, we preyen hym to beholden first in the seconde maundement of God that seith 'Thou schalt not take Goddis name in idil;' and sythen the mervelous werkis of God ben his name, as the gode werkis of craftesman been his name, than in this hest of God is forbeden to takun the mervelouse werkis of God in idil; and how mowen thei be more takyn in idil than whanne thei ben maad mennus japynge stikke, as when thei ben pleyid of japeris? And sythen ernestly God dyde hem to us, so take we hem of hym; ellis fosothe we taken hem in veyn. Loke thanne, frend, ȝif thi byleve tellith that God dide his myraclis to us for we shulden pleyn hem, and yn trowe it seith to the, 'nay, but for thou schuldist more dredyn hym and lovyn hym,' and certis greet drede and gret effectuel loove suffrith no pleyinge nor japyng with hym. Thanne sythen myraclis pleyinge reversith the wille of God, and the ende for the which be wrouȝt myraclis to us, no doute but that myraclis pleyinge is verré takyng of Goddis name in ydil. And ȝif this suffisith not to thee, albeit that it shulde suffisen to an hethene man, that therefore wil not pley in the werkis of his mawmete, I preye thee rede enterly in the book of lyf that is Crist Jhesus, and if thou mayst fynden in hym that he evere exsaumplide that men shulden pleye myraclis, but alwey the revers, and oure byleve cursith that ladden or lassen over that Crist exsaumplide us to don. Hou thanne darst thou holden with myraclis pleyinge, sythen alle the werkis of Crist reversiden hem, and in none of his werkis thei ben groundyd? namely, sythen thou seyst thiselven that thou wolt nothing leven but that may be schewid of oure bileve, and sythen in thing that is acordyng with the flessh and to the likyng of it, as is myraclis pleyinge, thou wilt nothing don aȝenus it, but ȝif it be schewid of oure bileve; myche more in thing that is with the spirit, and alwey exsawmplid in the lif of Christ, and so fully writen in the booke of lif, as is levyng of myraclis pleyinge and of alle japyng, thou shuldest not holden aȝenys it, but if it myȝte ben schewid aȝens the

bileve, sythen in al thyng that is dowtous men shulden holden with the partye that is more favowrable to the spirit, and more exsawmpplid in the lif of Christ; and so as eche synne distruyith hymsilf, and eche falshed, so thi answere distruyith hymsilfe, and therby thou mayst wel witen that it is not trewe, but verré unkyndenesse; for if thou haddist hadde a fadir that hadde suffred a dispitouse deth to geten thee thyn heritage, and thou therafter woldest so liȝtly bern it to make therof a pley to the and to alle the puple, no dowte but that alle gode men wolden demyen the unkynde, miche more God and alle his seyntis demyen alle tho cristen men unkynde that pleyen or favouren the pley of the deth or of the myracles of the most kynde fadir Crist, that dyede and wrouȝte myraclis to bryngen men to the evere-lastande heretage of hevene.

. . . . . .

Therfore siche myraclis pleyinge now on dayes witnessith thre thingis, first, is grete synne byforne the, second, it witnessith grete foly in the doinge, and the thridde greet venjaunse aftir; for riȝt as the chyldren of Israel, whan Moyses was in the hil bisily preyinge for hem, thei mystristyng to hym, honouriden a calf of gold, and afterward eetyn and drinken and risen to pleyn, and afterward weren sleyn of hem thre and twenty thowsend of men; so thanne as this pleyinge wittnesside the synne of ther maumetrie beforn, and her mystryst to Moyses whanne thei shulde most han tristenede to hym, and after ther foly in ther pleyinge, and the thridde the venjaunse that cam after; so this myraclis pleyinge is verré witnesse of mennus averice and coveytise byfore, that is maumetrie, as seith the apostele, for that that thei shulden spendyn upon the nedis of ther neȝeboris, thei spenden upon the pleyis, and to peyen ther rente and ther dette thei wolen grucche, and to spende two so myche upon ther pley thei wolen nothing grucche. Also to gideren men togidere to bien the derre ther vetailis, and to stiren men to glotonye, and to pride and boost, thei pleyn thes myraclis, and also to han wherof to spenden on these myraclis, and to holde felawschipe of glotenye and lecherie in sich dayes of myraclis pleyinge, thei bisien hem beforn to more gredily bygilen ther neȝbors, in byinge and in sellying; and so this pleyinge of myraclis now on dayes is werré witnesse of hideous ceveytise, that is maumetrie. And riȝt as Moyses was that tyme in the hil most travelynge aboute the puple, so now is Crist in hevene with his fader most bisily preyinge for the puple; and never the latere as the chlyndren (*sic*) of Israel diden that tyme that in hem was, in ther pleyinge of ther maumetrie, most folily to distroȝen the grete travele of Moyses, so men now on dayees, after ther hidouse

maumetree of covetyse in ther pleyinge of myraclis, thei don that in hem is to distroȝe the ententive preyere of Crist in hevene for hem, and so ther myraclis pleyinge witnessith ther most folye in ther doynge, and therfore as unkyndely seiden to Aaron the children of Israel, Moyses beinge in the hil, 'we witen never how it is of Moyses, make us therfore Goddis that gon biforn us,' so unkyndeli seyen men nowe on dayes, 'Crist doth now no myraclis for us, pley we therfore his olde,' addyng many lesynges therto so colowrably that the puple ȝife as myche credense to hem as to the trwthe, and so thei forȝeten to ben percever of the preyere of Crist, for the maumetrye that men don to siche myraclis pleyinge; maumetrye, I seye, for siche pleyinge men as myche honoryn or more than the word of God whanne it is prechid, and therefore blasfemely thei seyen, that siche pleyinge doith more good than the word of God wanne it is prechid to the puple. A! Lord! what more blasfeme is aȝenus thee, than to seyen to don the byddyng, as is to prechen the word of God doth fer lasse good than to don that that is bodyn onely by man and not by God, as is myraclis pleying? Rit forsothe, as the lyknesse of myraclis we clepen myraclis, riȝt so the golden calfe the children of Israel clepiden it God; in the whiche thei hadden mynde of the olde myraclis of God beforn, and for that licnesse thei worschipiden and preyseden, as thei worschipiden and presiden God in the dede of his myraclis to hem, and therefore thei diden expresse maumetrye. So sythen now on daies myche of the puple worschipith and preysith onely the licnesse of the myraclis of God, as myche as the worde of God in the prechours mowth by the whiche alle myraclis be don, no dowte that ne the puple doth more mawmetrie now in siche myraclis pleyinge than dide the puple of Israel that tyme in heryinge of the calf, in as myche as the lesynges and lustus of myraclis pleyinge that men worschipen in hem is more contrarious to God, and more acordynge with the devil, than was that golden calf that the puple worschipid. And therefore the maumetrye that tyme was but figure and licknesse of mennus maumetrye nowe, and therfore seith the apostel, asse thes thingis in figure fellen to hem, and therefore in siche myraclis pleyinge the devel is most plesid, as the dyvel is best payid to disceyve men in the licnesse of that thing in whiche by God man weren convertid biforhond, and in whiche the devel was tenyd byfornhond. Therfore oute of doute siche myraclis pleying pretith myche more venjaunce than dide the pleyinge of the chyldren of Israel, after the heriynge of the calf, as this pleyinge settith but japes grettere and more benfetes of God.

V.

RECORDS OF COMMON LIFE.

I have somewhere seen it stated that Trevisa's manuscript of his translation of Glanvilla de Proprietatibus Rerum is still in existence. Philologically speaking, an edition of a work of this character would be more valuable than a chronicle or a poem of equal extent. The variety of subjects discussed by Glanville supposes a correspondingly extensive vocabulary, and a greater range of verbal combination than would be likely to occur in historical narrative, or in poetry, the dialect of which is more conventional than that of prose. It is to works on natural knowledge, and which connect themselves with practical life, that we are chiefly to look for information upon the actual speech of bygone ages, and especially upon historical etymology—the true story of the metamorphoses and migrations of words.

Grammaticasters seek the history of language in written, and especially in elegant literature; but, except in the fleeting dialect of pedants, linguistic change and progress begin in oral speech, and it is long before the pen takes up and records the forms and words which have become established in the living tongue.

If you would know the present tendencies of English, go, as Luther did, to the market and the workshop; you will there hear new words and combinations, which orators and poets will adopt in a future generation; and in investigating the philological history of past ages, whose market-places are grass-grown, and the hum of whose industry is stilled, you must resort to those written memorials whose subjects most nearly approximate to the busy every-day life of their time.

That literature which best preserves the unpremeditated, half-unconscious verbal expression of humanity is richest in true philological instruction, as it is in its revelations of the intellect and the heart of man: hence the great value and the profound interest of old familiar letters, journals, private records of all sorts. Precisely the disclosures we shrink most from making with respect to ourselves, and the outspoken expressions we are shyest in using, attract us most in the life of distant ages. The most insignificant original memorial of the actual words of a living man has an imperishable worth to remote posterity. Refined and sensitive persons destroy their family letters, and are reluctant to record their names in the albums of paper and of stone with which all places of resort abound; but, though we may not approve the vanity which led a distinguished author to have his name carved on

the summit of a pyramid he did not climb, I think no traveller looks on the record of a visit to one of the tombs of the Egyptian kings by an ancient Greek—who expresses his disappointment at finding nothing to admire, *εἰ μὴ τὸν λίθον*—or at the inscription rudely cut on the legs of a gigantic statue at the entrance of the great rock-temple of Abou Simbel, to commemorate the halt of a detachment of Roman soldiery sent up into Nubia in search of deserters—or even at the bare name which, three hundred years ago, the old herbalist, Belon, scratched with the point of his dagger on the smoky wall of a convent kitchen, now in ruins, in Arabia Petræa—without feeling that he has added to his stores of knowledge both a historical fact and a 'form of words,' which will adhere to his memory when many an eloquent phrase shall have vanished from it.

LECTURE X.

THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY TO THE TIME OF CAXTON.

WHEN the political and mental agitations of the fourteenth century — which had been, if not occasioned, at least greatly increased by the antipapal schism — had once subsided, the intellectual activity of the age of Langlande and Wycliffe and Chaucer suddenly ceased, and was followed by a long period of repose, or perhaps I might rather say, of lethargy. The literary monuments we possess of the early part of the fifteenth century exhibit few traces of original power. In some of them, even the language seems to have rather retrograded than advanced; nor did it manifest much substantial progress, until the new life, which the invention of printing infused into literature, made itself felt in England.

The English mind, brilliant as were its achievements in the era we have just passed over, was not yet so thoroughly roused and enlivened, that it was able to go on in the path of creative literature by its own inherent energies. It still required external impulse; and it was only by the succession of electric shocks it received from the four greatest events in modern history, which so rapidly followed each other — the invention of printing, the discovery of the passage around the Cape of Good Hope, and of the American continent, and the Reformation — that it was fully awakened and inspired with that undying energy which, for three hundred years, has filled the world with its renown.

The first important poetical writer of the fifteenth century, whose works have come down to us, is Thomas Occleve, a lawyer, who is supposed to have flourished about the year 1420. Most of his works exist only in manuscript, and those that have been printed are not of a character to inspire a very lively desire for the publication of the remainder. They are principally didactic, and in great part translations, the most important of them being a treatise on the Art of Government, taken principally from a Latin work of Egidius, a Roman writer of the thirteenth century. The diction of Occleve is modelled after that of Chaucer, of whom he professes to have been a pupil, but there are some grammatical differences, the most noticeable of them being the constant omission of the *n* final in the infinitive mood, and in the third person plural of the verbs. This, though not uncommon, was but of occasional, or at least of very irregular occurrence in the preceding century.

I can find nothing better worthy of citation from this author than his lamentation upon Chaucer, which Warton gives from an unpublished manuscript:

> But weleawaye, so is myne hertè wo,
> That the honour of English tonge is dede,
> Of which I wont was han counsel and rede!
> O mayster dere, and fadir reverent,
> My mayster Chaucer, floure of eloquence,
> Mirrour of fructuous entendement,
> O universal fadir in science,
> Alas, that thou thine excellent prudence
> In thy bed mortel mightest not bequethe!
> What eyled Deth? Alas why would he sle the!
> O Deth that didist nought harm singulere
> In slaughtre of him, but all the lond it smertith:
> But natheless, yet hastowe no powere
> His name to sle. His hie vertue astertith
> Unslayn from thee, which aye us lifely hertith
> With boke[s] of his ornatè enditing,
> That is to all this lond enlumyning.

The versification of this extract is interesting as showing that

the *e* final, which seems to have become silent soon after, was still pronounced in Occleve's time, at least in poetry, as it had been in Chaucer's; for *bequeath*, spelt *bequethe*, is made to rhyme to *sle the* —

> In thy bed mortel mightest not *bequethé!*
> What eyled Deth? Alas why would he *sle the?*

The *e* final, which is mute in prose, is still counted in French versification, and not unfrequently requires a prosodical accent, though in actual reading of poetry, it is not much dwelt upon. That it was once normally articulated in prose, in both English and French, there can be no doubt. At what period it became silent in either, it is difficult to determine, partly because orthography seldom accurately represents orthoepy, and partly because the change, like other orthoepical and grammatical revolutions, came in gradually, and locally, so that while one province or writer in a given century may have dropped the *e*, another may have retained it many years later. The cause of the loss of this articulation is the same in both languages, namely, the tendency of both to discard inflectional syllables — a tendency much aggravated in English by the confusion introduced into its grammar through a mixture of unrelated tongues discordant in their accidences.

Changes of this sort are not received in literature until they have been long established in speech, and the fact, that in French poetry the *e* final still counts as a syllable, while it has been null in English verse for certainly three centuries, would seem to imply that it continued to be colloquially pronounced in France much longer than in England.

Contemporaneously with Occleve lived James I. of Scotland, who was illegally seized, in his early childhood,* by Henry IV.

* There is a good deal of discrepancy among the authorities as to the date of King James's capture — or rather as to his age at the time — and the duration of his imprisonment. In the third and fifth stanzas of the second canto of the King's Quair, the king himself says that he was taken prisoner at the age of

of England in the year 1405, and kept for nearly twenty years a prisoner. His captor caused him to be well educated, and besides several pieces written, as it is said, unequivocally in the Scottish dialect — the criticism of which does not come within the plan of this course — he wrote, in English, as it seems, a poem in about fourteen hundred lines, called the King's Quair, or book. This is a eulogistic rhapsody on the Lady Jane Beau-

three, and in the sixth stanza of the same canto, he states that he had already been imprisoned eighteen years, when he first saw his mistress:—

III.

Not far passit the state of innocence
  But nere about the nowmer of zeiris thre,
Were it causit throu hevinly influence
  Of Goddis will, or other casualtee,
Can I not say, bot out of my contree,
  By thair avise y^{t} had of me the cure
  Be see to pas, tuke I my aventure.

V.

Upon the wevis weltring to and fro,
  So infortunate was we that fremyt day,
That maugre plainly quethir we wold or no,
  W^{t} strong hand by forse schortly to say,
Of inymyis taken and led away,
  We weren all, and bro^{t} in thaire contree,
  Fortune it schupe non othir wayis to be.

VI.

Quhare as in strayte ward, and in strong prison,
  So fere forth of my lyf the hevy lyne,
W^{t}out confort in sorowe, abandoune
  The secund sistere, lukit hath to tuyne,
Nere, by the space of zeris twice nyne,
  Till Jupiter his merci list advert,
  And send confort in relesche of my smert.

In Holinshed's History of Scotland, reprint of 1808, vol. vi. p. 407, it is said: 'taken he was in the ninth yeare of his age, the 33 (*sic*) day of March, in the yeare of our incarnacion 1406, and was kept in captivitie of the Englishmen by the space of eightéene yeares.' On page 426, the king is said to have been murdered on the 21 of February 1436, 'in the 44 yéere of his age.' If King James was forty-three years old in 1436, he must have been more than eight in 1406, and upon the whole I think it safer to follow King James's own chronology than that of historical compilers.

fort, whom King James afterwards married; and though its subject and purpose did not give room for much fertility of invention, it is full of delicacy, grace and feeling, smooth and artistic in versification, and, in general poetic merit, superior to any other English verse of the fifteenth or even the first half of the sixteenth century.

The dialect is remarkable both for the occasional introduction of Scandinavian words and forms — reminiscences, possibly, of the author's childhood, which was used to a dialect much modified by Northern influences — and especially for its freedom from all French terms and idioms which had not been fairly naturalized in English. The proportion of Romance words in the King's Quair is scarcely greater than in the works of Chaucer or of Gower, and, as in those authors, we find that most of them are introduced rather for the sake of rhyme and metre, than for any superior adaptedness to poetical expression. His description of the lady of whom he was enamoured is worth quoting at length:

And therewt keſt I doun myn eye ageyne,
  Quhare as I ſaw walkyng under the Toure,
Full ſecretely, new cumyn hir to pleyne,
  The faireſt or the freſcheſt zoung floure
That ever I ſawe, methot, before that houre,
  For quhich ſodayne abate, anon aſtert,
  The blude of all my body to my hert.

And though I ſtood abaiſit tho a lyte,
  No wonder was; for quhy? my wittis all
Were ſo ouercome wt pleſance and delyte,
  Only through latting of myn eyen fall,
That ſudaynly my hert become hir thrall,
  For ever of free wyll, for of manace
  There was no takyn in hir ſuete face.

And in my hede I drew ryt haſtily,
  And eſt ſones I lent it out ageyne,
And ſaw hir walk that verray womanly,
  With no wight mo, bot only women tueyne,
Than gan I ſtudy in myſelf and ſeyne,
  Ah! ſuete are ze a warldly creature,
  Or hevingly thing in likeneſſe of nature?

Or ar ze god Cupidis owin princeſſe?
  And cumyn are to louſe me out of band,
Or are ze veray Nature the goddeſſe,
  That have depayntit wt zour hevinly hand,
This gardyn full of flouris, as they ſtand?
  Quhat ſall I think, allace! quhat reverence
  Sall I meſter to zour excellence?

Giff ze a goddeſſe be, and yt ze like
  To do me payne, I may it not aſtert;
Giff ze be warldly wight, yt dooth me ſike,
  Quhy leſt God mak zou ſo my dereſt hert,
To do a ſely priſoner thus ſmert,
  That luſis zou all, and wote of not but wo,
  And, therefore, merci ſuete! ſen it is ſo.

Quhen I a lytill thrawe had maid my mone,
  Bewailing myn infortune and my chance,
Unknawin how or quhat was beſt to done,
  So ferre I fallying into luſis dance,
That ſodeynly my wit, my contenance,
  My hert, my will, my nature, and my mynd,
  Was changit clene ryt in ane other kind.

Of hir array the form gif I ſal write,
  Toward her goldin haire, and rich atyre,
In fretwiſe couchit wt perlis quhite,
  And grete balas lemyng as the fyre,
Wt mony ane emerant and faire ſaphire,
  And on hir hede a chaplet freſch of hewe,
  Of plumys partit rede, and quhite, and blewe.

Full of quaking ſpangis bryt as gold,
  Forgit of ſchap like to the amorettis,
So new, ſo freſch, ſo pleaſant to behold,
  The plumys eke like to the floure jonettis,
And other of ſchap, like to the floure jonettis;
  And, above all this, there was, wele I wote,
  Beautee eneuch to mak a world to dote.

About hir neck, quhite as the fyre amaille,
  A gudelie cheyne of ſmall orfeverye,
Quhare by there hang a ruby, wtout faille
  Like to ane hert ſchapin verily,
That, as a ſperk of lowe ſo wantonly
  Semyt birnyng upon hir quhite throte,
  Now gif there was gud pertye, God it wote.

And for to walk that freſche Mayes morowe,
  Ane huke ſhe had upon her tiſſew quhite,
That gudeliare had not bene ſene to forowe,
  As I ſuppoſe, and girt ſche was alyte;
Thus halflyng lowſe for haſte, to ſuich delyte,
  It was to ſee her zouth in gudelihed,
  That for rudenes to ſpeke thereof I drede.

In hir was zouth, beautee, wt humble aport,
  Bountee, richeſſe, and womanly ſaiture,
God better wote than my pen can report,
  Wiſdome, largeſſe eſtate, and conyng ſure
In every point, ſo guydit hir meſure,
  In word, in dede, in ſchap, in contenance,
  That nature myt no more hir childe auance.

Throw quhich anon I knew and underſtude
  Wele yt ſche was a warldly creature,
On quhom to reſt myn eye, ſo mich gude
  It did my woful hert, I zow aſſure
That it was to me joye wtout meſure,
  And, at the laſt, my luke unto the hevin
  I threwe furthwith, and ſaid thir verſis ſevin:

O Venus clere! of goddis ſtellifyit,
  To quhom I zelde homage and ſacrifiſe,
Fro this day forth zour grace be magnifyit,
  That me reſſauit have in ſuch wiſe,
To lyve under zour law and ſo ſeruiſe;
  Now help me furth, and for zour merci lede
  My hert to reſt, yt deis nere for drede.

Quhen I wt gude entent this oriſon
  Thus endit had, I ſtynt a lytill ſtound,
And eſt myn eye full pitouſly adoun
  I keſt, behalding unto hir lytill hound,
That wt his bellis playit on the ground,
  Than wold I ſay, and ſigh therewt a lyte,
  Ah! wele were him yt now were in thy plyte!

An othir quhile the lytill nyghtingale,
  That ſat upon the twiggis, wold I chide,
And ſay ryt thus, Quhare are thy notis ſmale,
  That thou of love has ſong this morowe tyde?
Scis thou not hir yt ſittis the beſyde?
  Ffor Venus' ſake, the blisfull goddeſſe clere,
  Sing on agane, and mak my Lady chere.

And eke I pray, for all the paynes grete,
  That, for the love of Proigne, thy ſiſter dere,
Thou ſufferit quhilom, quhen thy breſtis wete
  Were with the teres of thyne eyen clere,
All bludy ronne y^t pitee was to here,
  The crueltee of that unkny^tly dede,
  Quhare was fro the bereſt thy maidenhede.

Liſt up thyne hert, and ſing w^t gude entent,
  And in thy notis ſuete the treſon telle,
That to thy ſiſter trewe and innocent,
  Was kythit by hir huſband falſe and fell,
Ffor quhois gilt, as it is worthy well,
  Chide thir huſbandis y^t are falſe, I ſay,
  And bid them mend in the XX deuil way.

O lytill wreich, allace! maiſt thou not ſe
  Quho comyth zond? Is it now time to wring?
Quhat ſory tho^t is fallin upon the?
  Opyn thy throte; haſtow no leſt to ſing?
Allace! ſen thou of reſon had felyng,
  Now, ſwete bird ſay ones to me pepe,
  I dee for wo; me think thou gynis ſlepe.

Haſtow no mynde of luſe? quhare is thy make?
  Or artow ſeke, or ſmyt w^t jelouſye?
Or is ſche dede, or hath ſche the forſake?
  Quhat is the cauſe of thy melancolye,
That thou no more liſt maken melodye?
  Sluggart, for ſchame! lo here thy golden houre
  That worth were hale all thy lyvis laboure.

Gif thou ſuld ſing wele ever in thy lyve,
  Here is, in ſay, the time, and eke the ſpace:
Quhat woſtow then? Sum bird may cum and ſtryve
  In ſong w^t the, the maiſtry to purchace.
Suld thou than ceſſe, it were great ſchame allace,
  And here to wyn gree happily for ever;
  Here is the tyme to ſyng, or ellis never.

I tho^t eke thus gif I my handis clap,
  Or gif I caſt, than will ſche flee away;
And, gif I hald my pes, than will ſche nap;
  And gif I crye, ſche wate not quhat I ſay:
Thus quhat is beſt, wate I not be this day,
  Bot blawe wynd, blawe, and do the leuis ſchake,
  That ſum tuig may wag, and make hir to wake.

With that anon ryt ſche toke up a ſang,
  Quhare com anon mo birdis and alight;
Bot than to here the mirth was tham amang,
  Ouer that to ſee the ſuete ſicht
Of hyr ymage, my ſpirit was ſo light,
  Methot I flawe for joye wtout areſt,
  So were my wittis bound in all to ſeſt.

And to the nottis of the philomene,
  Quhilkis ſche ſang the ditee there I maid
Direct to hir yt was my hertis quene,
  Withoutin quhom no ſongis may be glade,
And to that ſanct walking in the ſchade,
  My bedis thus with humble hert entere,
  Deoutly I ſaid on this manere.

Quhen ſall zour merci rew upon zour man,
  Quhois ſeruice is yet uncouth unto zow,
Sen quhen ze go, there is not ellis than,
  Bot hert quhere as the body may not throu
Folow thy hevin, quho ſuld be glad bot thou,
  That ſuch a gyde to folow has undertake,
  Were it throu hell, the way thou not forſake.

And, eſter this, the birdis everichone
  Tuke up ane other ſang full loud and clere,
And wt a voce ſaid, Well is vs begone,
  That with our makis are togider here;
We proyne and play wtout dout and dangere,
  All clothit in a ſoyte full freſch and newe,
  In luffis ſervice beſy, glad, and trewe.

And ze freſch May, ay mercifull to bridis,
  Now welcum be, ze floure of monethis all,
Ffor not onely zour grace upon us bydis,
  Bot all the warld to witnes this we call,
That ſtrowit hath ſo plainly over all,
  Wt new freſch ſuete and tender grene,
  Our lyf, our luſt, our governoure, our quene.

This was their ſang, as ſemyt me full heye,
  Wt full mony uncouth ſwete note and ſchill,
And therewt all that faire vpward hir eye
  Wold caſt amang, as it was Goddis will,
Quhare I might ſe, ſtanding alone full ſtill,
  The faire faiture yt nature, for maiſtrye,
  In hir viſage wrot had full lufingly.

And, quhen ſche walkit, had a lytill thrawe
  Under the ſuete grene bewis bent,
Hir ſaire freſch face, as quhite as any ſnawe,
  Sche turnyt has, and furth her wayis went;
Bot tho began myn axis and turment,
  To ſene hir part, and folowe I na my^{t},
  Metho^{t} the day was turnyt into ny^{t}.

The dialect of this poem is English in almost everything but the spelling. Only a single old manuscript of the King's Quair exists, and I do not know that there is any reason to suppose it to be the original, or even an authentic copy. The occasional halting of the metre, which is in general smooth, is strong evidence of some corruption of the text; and it may be considered impossible that a young man, educated in England from the age of three or even of eight or nine years, should have employed the orthography of the manuscript in question. It is, therefore, either a transcript made by a scribe not well versed in the English dialect, or it has been *nationalized* by some Caledonian, who 'loved Scotland better than the truth.'

King James acknowledged Gower and Chaucer as his masters, but he certainly did not learn from them this spelling of the concluding stanza of the poem, in which he confesses his obligations to them: —

Vnto impnis of my maisteris dere,
  Gowere and Chaucere, that on the steppis satt
Of rhethorike, quhill thai were lyvand here,
  Superlatiue as poetis laureate,
In moralitee and eloquence ornate,
  I recommend my buk in lynis seven,
  And eke thair saulis vnto the blisse of hevin.

Apart from the internal evidence of the poem itself, we have abundant other proof that its dialect is not that of the Scottish nation in the first third of the fifteenth century. Holinshed has preserved for us a piece of testimony on this subject, directly connected with the prince himself, in a letter written

by King Robert to King Henry IV., in anticipation of the possibility of the young prince's capture while trying to 'force the blockade,' and proceed to France. The diction of this epistle is in the same pedantic strain which characterised the dialect of many Scotch writers of the following century. Fully twenty-five per cent. of the words are French or Latin, and among them are such expressions as: 'thair empire is caduke and fragill,' 'quhan princes ar roborat be amitee of other, &c.,' 'to obtemper to thir owr desires,' and the like. In short, the whole style of the letter is as remote as possible from the simplicity and naturalness of expression that marked the English of that period, and of which King James's poem constitutes so good a specimen.

A little later, or about the year 1430, flourished Lydgate, a poet of moderate merit, but to whom the popularity of his principal subjects, the Fall of Princes, taken from Boccaccio, the Destruction of Troy, and the Siege of Thebes — all founded on middle-age adaptations and amplifications of classical narratives — gave a more general circulation than the works of any other writer of that century obtained.

Lydgate's poems are extremely numerous, and mostly still inedited. They embrace a vast variety of subjects, including some not precisely fit to be treated by an ecclesiastic. The unpublished works, so far as can be judged by the scanty extracts in Warton and other critical writers, are of at least equal merit with those which have been printed. It is much to be wished that a selection of them might be edited, because, from their great variety of topics, metre and prevalent tone, they would, no doubt, furnish important contributions to the history of English philology. Lydgate was one of the few Englishmen of his time who enjoyed the benefit of both an English education and a Continental literary training. He not only visited Italy, as did hundreds of the priesthood, for professional purposes, but carefully studied and mastered the languages and secular literature of that country and of France; and he is said to have opened a school at his monastery, after his return, for the

instruction of young gentlemen in the arts of poetry and rhetoric, and in all that is called belles-lettres learning.

The Story of Thebes was written as a sort of continuation of the Canterbury Tales, and is preceded by a prologue, in which the author says he fell accidentally into company with Chaucer's pilgrims, and was invited to join them, and contribute a tale for the entertainment of the party. The dialect of this composition is evidently an imitation of the style and diction of Chaucer; and hence it is more antiquated than that of Lydgate's other works, many of which are even more modern, both in vocabulary and in idiom, than the diction of Spenser, who lived a century and a half later.

The Fall of Troy is a compilation from a great variety of sources, strung together not without art, and embellished with many apparently original inventions of Lydgate's own. It possesses an interest of an archæological as well as of a philological character, for it brings the action of the personages, their costumes, their architecture and their habits to those of Lydgate's time, and consequently adds something to our knowledge of the English social life of the fifteenth century.

The versification of Lydgate is generally very smooth, but it is sometimes difficult to resolve it into prosodical feet, on account of the irregularity in the pronunciation of the *e* final, which was now fluctuating, sometimes articulated and sometimes silent. Upon what rule the pronunciation rested, or whether the poet arbitrarily articulated or suppressed it, as the convenience of metre dictated, I am unable to say; but it is evident that in his time there was a rapidly increasing inclination to drop it in speech, though it was still retained in the orthography of a great number of words which have now lost it.

The minor poetry of the fifteenth century is in general of little interest or value, though there are some devotional pieces not devoid of merit in versification, if wanting in originality of thought. I give, as a specimen, a poem to the Virgin, from Wright and Halliwell's Reliquiæ Antiquæ, vol. ii. pp. 212, 213:

Mary moder, wel thow be!
Mary mayden, thynk on me;
Maydyn and moder was never non
To the, lady, but thou allon.
Swete Mary, mayden clene,
Shilde me fro all shame and tene;
And out of syn, lady, shilde thou me,
And out of det, for charité.
Lady, for thi joyes fyve,
Gyf me grace in this life
To know and kepe over all thyng
Cristyn feath and Goddis biddyng,
And truly wynne all that is nede
To me and myne, bothe cloth and fede.
Helpe me, lady, and alle myne,
Shilde me, lady, fro hel pyne.
Shilde me, lady, fro vilany,
And fro alle wycked cumpany.
Shilde me, lady, fro evel shame,
And from all wyckid fame.
Swete Mary, mayden mylde,
Fro the fende thou me shilde,
That the fende me not dere;
Swete lady, thou me were
Bothe be day and be nyȝt;
Helpe me, lady, with alle thi myȝt,
For my frendis, lady, I pray the,
That thei may saved be
To ther soulis and ther life,
Lady, for thi joyes fyve.
For myn enimys I pray also,
That thei may here so do,
That thei nor I in wrath dye;
Swete lady, I the pray,
And thei that be in dedly synne,
Let hem never dye therin;
But swete lady, thou hem rede
For to amende ther my seede.
Swete lady, for me thou pray to hevyn kyng,
To graunt me howsill, Christe, and gode endyng.
Jhesu, for thi holy grace,
In heven blisse to have a place;

Lady as I trust in the,
These prayers that thou graunt me;
And I shall, lady, her belyve
Grete the with avys fyve,
A pater noster and a crede,
To helpe me, lady, at my nede.
Swete lady, full of wynne,
Full of grace and gode within,
As thou art flour of alle thi kynne,
Do my synnes for to blynne,
And kepe me out of dedly synne,
That I be never takyn therin.

I add, from the same collection, a short poem on grammatical rules, written in a dialect which shows that the author, however good a Latinist he may have been, had very vague notions of English accidence and orthography:—

My lefe chyld, I kownsel ye
To furme thi vj. tens, thou awyse ye;
And have mynd of thi clensoune,
Both of nowne and of pronowne,
And ilk case in plurele,
How thai sal end, awyse the wele;
And thi participyls forgete thou nowth,
And thi comparysons be yn thi thowth;
Thynk of the revele of the relatyfe,
And then schalle thou the bettyr thryfe;
Lat never interest downe falle,
Nor *penitet* with hys felows alle;
And how this Englis schalle cum in,
Wyt *tanto* and *quanto* in a Latyn,
And how this Englis schalle be chawngede,
Wyt verbis newtyrs qwen thai are hawede;
And howe a verbe schalle be furmede,
Take gode hede that thou be not stunnede;
The ablatyfe case thou hafe in mynd,
That he be saved in hys kynd;
Take gode hede qwat he wylle do.
And how a nowne substantyfe,
Wylle corde with a verbe and a relatyfe;
Posculo, posco, peto.

And yf thou wylle be a grammarion,
Owne thi fyngers to construccyon,
The infenytyfe mode alle thorowth,
Wyt his suppyns es mykylle wroth;
And thynk of propur nownnys,
Both of kastels and of townnys;
And when *oportet* cums in plas,
Thou knawys *miserere* has no gras.

The political poetry of this period, as a contribution to contemporaneous history, has a value quite independent of its merits, or rather demerits, in a literary point of view. The rhymed chronicles are every way worthless; but some of the controversial and polemic political verse has much higher claims. The Libel of English Policy, a poem of some fifteen hundred lines, written apparently in the year 1436, is among the most important productions of its kind, and is remarkable for far-sighted views of public policy, and the knowledge it displays of the material resources and commercial interests of England. The prologue deserves quoting at length:—

THE LIBEL OF ENGLISH POLICY.

Here beginneth the prologe of the processe of the Libelle of Englyshe Polycye, exhortynge alle Englande to kepe the see environn, and namelye the narowe see, shewynge whate profete commeth thereof, and also worshype and salvacioun to Englande and to alle Englyshe menne.

The trewe processe of Englysh polycye,
Of utterwarde to kepe thys regne in rest
Of oure England, that no man may denye,
Nere say of soth but one of the best
Is thys, that who seith southe, northe, est, and west,
Cheryshe merchandyse, kepe thamyralté,
That we bee maysteres of the narowe see.

Ffor Sigesmonde the grete emperoure,
Whyche yet regneth, whan he was in this londe
Wyth kynge Herry the v^te^, prince of honoure,
Here moche glorye as hym thought he founde;
A myghty londe, whyche hadde take on hondo
To werre in Ffraunce and make mortalité,
And evere welle kept rounde aboute the see.

And to the kynge thus he seyde, 'My brothere,'
  Whan he perceyved too townes Calys and Dovere,
'Of alle youre townes to chese of one and othere,
  'To kepe the see and sone to come overe
  'To werre oughtwardes and youre regne to recovere,
'Kepe these too townes, sire, and youre magesté,
'As youre tweyne eyne to kepe the narowe see.'

Ffor if this see be kepte in tyme of werre,
  Who cane here passe withought daungere and woo?
Who may eschape, who may myschef dyfferre?
  What marchaundye may for by be agoo?
  Ffor nedes hem muste take truse every ffoo,
Fflaundres, and Spayne, and othere, trust to me,
Or ellis hyndered alle for thys narowe see.

Therfore I caste me by a lytele wrytinge
  To shewe att eye thys conclusione,
Ffor concyens and for myne acquytynge
  Ayenst God and ageyne abusyon,
  And cowardyse and to oure enmyes confusione;
Ffor iiij. thynges our noble sheueth to me,
Kyng, shype and, swerde, and pouer of the see.

Where bene oure shippes? where bene oure swerdes become?
  Owre enmyes bid for the shippe sette a shepe.
Allas! oure reule halteth, hit is benome;
  Who dare weel say that lordeshyppe shulde take kepe?
  I wolle asaye, thoughe myne hert gynne to wepe,
To do thys werke, yf we wole ever the,
Ffor verry shame, to kepe aboute the see.

Shalle any prynce, what so be hys name,
  Wheche hathe nobles moche lyche oures,
Be lorde of see, and Fflemmyngis to oure blame
  Stoppe us, take us, and so make fade the floures
  Of Englysshe state, and disteyne oure honnoures?
Ffor cowardyse, allas! hit shulde so be;
Therfore I gynne to wryte now of the see.

After the prologue, follow chapters on the trade between the Continental states, which is conducted by way of the British channel, the object being to show that if England controls that

strait by her maritime towns on both coasts, and her fleets, she is virtually the mistress of the commerce of Western Europe. These chapters furnish a good deal of information on the productive industry, the imports and exports, and all the financial interests of the countries bounded by the Atlantic and the Baltic seas, as well as of the most important Mediterranean ports, which latter seem to have furnished England with many of the lighter and more costly articles of trade and luxury, called by the writer, 'commodités and nycetees:'—

The grete galees of Venees and Fflorence
Be wel ladene wyth thynges of complacence,
Alle spicerye and of grocers ware,
Wyth swete wynes, alle manere of chaffare,
Apes, and japes, and marmusettes taylede,
Nifles, trifles, that litelle have availede,
And thynges wyth whiche they fetely blere oure eye,
Wyth thynges not enduryng that we bye;
Ffor moche of thys chaffare that is wastable
Mighte be forborne for dere and dyssevable.
And that I wene, as for infirmitees,
In oure Englonde is suche comoditees,
Wythowten helpe of any othere londe,
Whych by wytte and practike bethe ifounde,
That alle humors myght be voyded sure;
Whych that we gledre wyth oure Englysh cure,
That wee shulde have no nede to skamonye,
Turbit, euforbe, correcte, diagredie,
Rubarde, sené, and yet they bene to nedefulle;
But I knowe thynges also spedefulle,
That growene here, as these thynges seyde;
Lett of this matere no mane be dysmayde,
But that a man may voyde infirmytee
Wythoute degrees fet fro beyonde the see.
And yett there shulde excepte be ony thynge,
It were but sugre, truste to my seyinge.
He that trustith not to my seyinge and sentence,
Lett hym better serche experience.
In this mater I wole not ferthere prese,
Who so not beleveth, let hym leve and sease.

Thus these galeise for this lykynge ware,
And etynge ware, bere hens oure beste chaffare,
Clothe, wolle, and tynne, whiche, as I seyde beforne,
Oute of this londe werste myghte be forborne.
Ffor eche other londe of necessité
Have grete nede to by some of the thre;
And wee resseyve of hem into this cooste
Ware and chaffare that lyghtlye wol be loste.
And wolde Jhesu that oure lordis wolde
Considre this wel, both yonge and olde;
Namelye olde, that have experience,
That myghte the yonge exorten to prudence.
What harme, what hurt, and what hinderaunce
Is done to us unto youre grete grevaunce,
Of suche londes and of suche nacions?
As experte men knowe by probacions;
By wretynge as discured oure counsayles,
And false coloure alwey the countertayles
Of oure enmyes, that dothe us hinderinge
Unto our goodes, oure realme, and to the kynge;
As wysse men have shewed welle at eye,
And alle this is colowred by marchaundrye.

This chapter is followed by 'an ensampelle of deseytte,' which furnishes some curious information on modes and rates of exchange and usury: —

Also they bere the golde owte of thys londe,
And souketh the thryfte awey oute of oure honde,
As the waffore soukethe honeye fro the bee,
So mynuceth oure commodité.
Now wolle ye here how they in Cotteswolde
Were wonte to borowe, or they schulde be solde,
Here wolle gode, as for yere and yere,
Of clothe and tynne they did in lych manere,
And in her galeys schyppe this marchaundye?
Than sone at Venice of them men wol it bye,
Then utterne there the chaffare be the payse.
And lyghtly als ther they make her reys.
And whan tho gode bene at Venice solde,
Than to carrye her chaunge they ben fulle bolde

Into Flaundres, whan thei this money have,
They wyll it profre ther sotelté to save,
To Englysshe marchaundis to yeve it oute by eschaunge,
To be paid agayn, thei make not straunge,
Here in Englonde, semynge for the better,
At the reseyvinge and syght of the lettir,
By iiij. pens lesse in the noble rounde,
That is xij. pens in the golden pounde.
And yf we wolle have of paymente,
A fulle monythe than moste hym nedes assente,
To viij. pens losse, that is shellyngis tweyne,
In the Englysshe pound, as eftesones ageyne
Ffor ij. monthes xij. pens must be paye,
In the Englysshe pounde, what is that to seye,
But iij. shyllingis, so that in pounde felle
Ffor hurte and harme harde is wyth hem to delle.
And whenne Englysshe marchaundys have contente
This eschaunge in Englonde of assente,
That these seyde Veneciance have in wone,
And Florentynes, to bere here golde sone
Overe the see into Flaundres ageyne.
And thus they lyve in Flaundres, sothe to sayne,
And in London, wyth suche chevesaunce
That men calle usuré, to oure losse and hinderaunce.

The wide range of vocabulary required for the lists of commodities and for the other commercial topics discussed in this poem, invests it with a good deal of philological interest, but it offers nothing new in point of syntax or inflection.

The prose writers of the first three quarters of the fifteenth century are not very numerous, nor, with an exception or two, important. There are several chroniclers of this period who have little historical merit, and it may be remarked as a rule almost without exception, that the secular prose of the fifteenth century is greatly inferior to the poetry, both in literary skill and in philological interest. The time had not yet come for the cultivation of the diction of prose. The freedom of speech, which had grown up in the decrepitude of Edward III. and the imbecility of his successor, the weak and unfortunate

Richard II., was gone. Liberty of thought was restrained in too many ways, tyrannized over by too many despotisms, to be allowed much range of exercise. The realities of life, political, social, ecclesiastical, could not safely be discussed, and it was only the imaginative, unsubstantial world of poetry, in which the English mind was allowed a little room for expansion.

But, in spite of every effort to quench it, the spark which Wycliffe had kindled still faintly glowed in the dreary ash-heap of the Church itself; and the works of Pecock afford a gratifying proof that the mantle of the reformer had fallen on worthy shoulders, though he who bore it was so little able to comprehend the scope and logical consequences of the principles on which he acted, that he knew not even in what direction he was marching.

The principal work of Pecock is called The Repressor of over-much Blaming of the Clergy. It was written about the year 1450, and a very good edition of it has just been published in the series entitled Chronicles and Memorials of Great Britain and Ireland in the Middle Ages. It is, as its title indicates, a defence of many of the doctrines held by the Church of Rome against the attacks of the Lollardists, or followers of Wycliffe, and other reformers. But while Pecock assailed the heretical opinions of the Lollardists, and sustained, with moderation, the supremacy of the Papal See, the adoration of images and the like, he was at the same time unconsciously undermining the position on which he stood, by admitting that general councils were not infallible, that the Scriptures were the true rule of faith, and that religious dogmas ought to be supported by argument, and not by the bare decree of an unreasoning authority. Clearer-sighted men than himself saw whither Pecock was drifting, and that his well-meant defence of the Church was, in reality, a formidable attack upon the radical principles of its organisation and the groundwork of its power. He was, therefore, degraded from his bishopric, compelled to recant, and confined for the rest of his life in a conventual prison.

The appearance of a work like the Repressor is important in the ecclesiastical annals of England, because so many of the writings of the early reformers were destroyed by the relentless hostility of the authorities of the Church, that our materials for a full history of those anticipatory movements are incomplete. But the work of Pecock has still stronger claims to the attention of the student of English literary history, both from its philological interest and from its intrinsic merits, as being, if not the first, yet certainly the ablest specimen of philosophical argumentation which had yet appeared in the English tongue. The style of Pecock bears a remarkable resemblance to that of Hooker, who lived a century and a half later; and this likeness in vocabulary and structure of period is one of the many evidences tending to prove that theology had, from the time of Wycliffe to the seventeenth century, a dialect of her own, which was in a great measure distinct from and independent of that of secular literature, and the regularity of whose progress was little affected by the fluctuations that mark the history of the English language in other departments of prose composition.

Although, in diction and arrangement of sentences, the Repressor is much in advance of the chroniclers of Pecock's age, the grammar, both in accidence and syntax, is in many points nearly where Wycliffe had left it; and it is of course in these respects considerably behind that of the poetical writers we have just been considering. Thus, while these latter authors, as well as some of earlier date, employ the objective plural pronoun *them*, and the plural possessive pronoun *their*, Pecock writes always *hem* for the personal and *her* for the possessive pronoun. Thus in chapter xx. vol. ii. p. 128, 'Forto conuicte and ouercome the said erring persoones of the lay peple, and for to make *hem* leue *her* errouris, an excellent remedie is the dryuyng of *hem* into sure knowing, or into weenyng or opinioun, that thei neden mich more to leerne and knowe into the profit and sure leernyng and knowing of Goddis lawe and seruice, than what thei mowe leerne and knowe bi *her*

reading and studiying in the Bible oonli,' &c. These pronominal forms, however, soon fell into disuse, and they are hardly to be met with in any English writer of later date than Pecock. With respect to one of them, however, the objective *hem* for *them*, it may be remarked that it has not become obsolete in colloquial speech to the present day; for in such phrases as *I saw 'em*, *I told 'em*, and the like, the pronoun *em* (or *'em*) is not, as is popularly supposed, a vulgar corruption of the full pronoun *them*, which alone is found in modern books, but it is the true Anglo-Saxon and old English objective plural, which, in our spoken dialect, has remained unchanged for a thousand years.

To those not familiar with the English of the end of the sixteenth, and the beginning of the seventeenth century, the style of Pecock has a quaint and antiquated air, from the free use of several obsolete forms, and especially of the adjective termination *able*, which he constantly adds to Saxon roots, as, for example, *unlackable*, instead of the French indispensable, *unagainsayable*, for indisputable. But such words were very common a hundred and fifty years after Pecock wrote, though now disused. The rejection of these hybrid words from the modern vocabulary is curious, as an instance of the unconscious exercise of a linguistic instinct by the English people. The objection to such adjectives is their mongrel character, the root being Saxon, the termination Romance; and it is an innate feeling of the incongruity of such alliances, not the speculative theories of philologists, which has driven so many of them out of circulation. Besides these forms, Pecock uses the verbal plural in *en*, and some other archaic inflections, as well as some now obsolete words. The union of these old inflections with a modern structure of period is interesting, because it shows that the fusion of French and Saxon had given to their product—the English tongue—a linguistic character which was founded more on logical principle than on grammatical form, and that our maternal speech has been for four hundred years

substantially the same, though its inflectional characteristics have been considerably changed.

The second chapter of the first part of the Repressor is here printed entire, as a sample of Pecock's logic:—

Forto meete azens the firste bifore spoken opinioun, and forto vnroote and updrawe it, y schal sette forth first xiij. principal conclusiouns. But for as miche as this vnrooting of the first opinioun and the proofis of tho xiij. conclusiouns mowen not be doon and made withoute strengthe of argumentis, therfore that y be the better and the cleerer vndirstonde of the lay peple in summe wordis to be aftir spoken in this present book, y sette nowe bifore to hem this doctrine taken schortli out of the faculte of logik. An argument if he be ful and foormal, which is clepid a sillogisme, is mad of twey proposiciouns dryuing out of hem and bi strengthe of hem the thridde proposicioun. Of the whiche thre proposiciouns the ij. first ben clepid premissis, and the iij^e^. folewing out of hem is clepid the conclusioun of hem. And the firste of tho ij. premissis is clepid the first premisse, and the ij^e^. of hem is clepid the ij^e^. premisse. And ech such argument is of this kinde, that if the bothe premissis ben trewe, the conclusioun concludid out and bi hem is also trewe; and but if euereither of tho premissis be trewe, the conclusioun is not trewe. Ensaumple her of is this. 'Ech man is at Rome, the Pope is a man, eke the Pope is at Rome.' Lo here ben sett forth ij. proposicions, which ben these, 'Ech man is at Rome;' and 'The Pope is a man;' and these ben the ij. premyssis in this argument, and thei dryuen out the iij^e^. proposicioun, which is this, 'The Pope is at Rome,' and it is the conclusioun of the ij. premissis. Wherfore certis if eny man can be sikir for eny tyme that these ij. premyssis be trewe, he may be sikir that the conclusioun is trewe; thouz alle the aungelis in heuen wolden seie and holde that thilk conclusioun were not trewe. And this is a general reule, in euery good and formal and ful argument, that if his premissis be knowe for trewe, the conclusioun ouzte be avowid for trewe, what euer creature wole seie the contrarie.

What propirtees and condiciouns ben requirid to an argument, that he be ful and formal and good, is tauzt in logik bi ful faire and sure reulis, and may not be tauzt of me here in this present book. But wolde God it were leerned of al the comon peple in her modiris langage, for thanne thei schulden therbi be putt fro myche ruydnes and boistosenes which thei han now in resonyng; and thanne thei schulden soone knowe and perceue whanne a skile and an argument bindith and whanne he not byndith, that is to seie, whanne he concludith and

proueth his conclusioun and whanne he not so dooth; and thanne thei schulden kepe hem silf the better fro falling into errouris, and thei myȝten the sooner come out of errouris bi heering of argumentis maad to hem, if thei into eny errouris weren falle; and thanne thei schulden not be so blunt and so ruyde and vnformal and boistose in resonyng, and that bothe in her arguying and in her answering, as thei now ben; and thanne schulden thei not be so obstinat aȝens clerkis and aȝens her prelatis, as summe of hem now ben, for defaut of perceuyng whanne an argument procedith into his conclusioun needis and whanne he not so dooth but semeth oonli so do. And miche good wolde come forth if a schort compendiose logik were deuysid for al the comoun peple in her modiris langage; and certis to men of court, leernyng the Kingis lawe of Ynglond in these daies, thilk now seid schort compendiose logik were ful preciose. Into whos making, if God wole graunte leue and leyser, y purpose sumtyme aftir myn othere bisynessis forto assaie.

But as for now thus miche in this wise ther of here talkid, that y be the better vndirstonde in al what y schal argue thoruȝ this present book, y wole come doun into the xiij. conclusiouns, of whiche the firste is this: It longith not to Holi Scripture, neither it is his office into which God hath him ordeyned, neither it is his part forto grounde eny gouernaunce or deede or seruice of God, or eny lawe of God, or eny trouthe which mannis resoun bi nature may fynde, leerne, and knowe.

That this conclusioun is trewe, y proue thus: Whateuer thing is ordeyned (and namelich bi God) for to be ground and fundament of eny vertu or of eny gouernaunce or deede or treuth, thilk same thing muste so teche and declare and seie out and ȝeue forth al the kunnyng vpon the same vertu or gouernance or trouthe, wher with and wherbi thilk same vertu, gouernaunce, or trouthe is sufficientli knowen, that withoute thilk same thing the same kunnyng of thilk same vertu, gouernaunce, or trouthe may not be sufficientli knowen, so that thilk same vertu, gouernaunce, or trouthe, in al the kunnyng withoute which he may not at fulle be leerned and knowen, muste nedis growe forth and come forth out and fro oonli thilk thing which is seid and holden to be ther of the ground and the fundament, as anoon aftir schal be proued: but so it is, that of no vertu, gouernaunce, or treuthe of Goddis moral lawe and seruice, into whos fynding, leerning, and knowing mannis witt may by his natural strengthe and natural helpis come, Holi Scripture al oon ȝeueth the sufficient kunnyng; neither fro and out of Holi Scripture al oon, whether he be take for the New Testament al oon, or for the Newe Testament and the Oold to gidere, as anoon after schal be proued, growith forth and cometh forth al the knowing which is nedeful

to be had upon it: wherfore nedis folewith, that of no vertu or gouernaunce or trouthe into which the doom of mannis resoun may sufficientli ascende and come to, for to it fynde, leerne, and knowe withoute reuelacioun fro God mad ther vpon, is groundid in Holi Scripture.

The firste premisse of this argument muste needis be grauntid. Forwhi, if the sufficient leernyng and kunnyng of eny gouernaunce or eny trouthe schulde as miche or more come fro an other thing, as or than fro this thing which is seid to be his ground, thanne thilk other thing schulde be lijk miche or more and rather the ground of thilk gouernaunce than this thing schulde so be; and also thilk gouernaunce or trouthe schuld haue ij. diuerse groundis and schulde be bildid vpon ij. fundamentis, of which the oon is dyuers atwyn fro the other, which forto seie and holde is not takeable of mannis witt. Wherfore the first premisse of the argument is trewe. Ensaumple her of is this: But if myn hous stode so in this place of erthe that he not stode so in an othir place of erthe ellis, this place of the erthe were not the ground of myn hous; and if eny othir place of the erthe bare myn hous, certis myn hous were not groundid in this place of the erthe: and in lijk maner, if this treuthe or gouernaunce, that ech man schulde kepe mekenes, were knowe bi sum other thing than bi Holi Scripture, and as weel and as sufficiently as bi Holi Scripture, thilk gouernaunce or trouth were not groundid in Holi Scripture. Forwhi he stood not oonli ther on; and therfore the first premisse is trewe. Also thus: Ther mai no thing be fundament and ground of a wal, or of a tree, or of an hous, saue it upon which the al hool substaunce of the wal, or of the tree, or of the hous stondith, and out of which oonly the wal, tree, or hous cometh. Wherfore bi lijk skile, no thing is ground and fundament of eny treuthe or conclusioun, gouernaunce or deede, saue it upon which aloon al the gouernaunce, trouthe, or vertu stondith, and out of which aloon al the same treuthe or gouernance cometh.

That also the ij^e^. premisse is trewe, y proue thus: What euer deede or thing doom of resoun dooth as fulli and as perfitli as Holi Scripture it dooth, Holi Scripture it not dooth onli or al oon; but so it is, that what euer leernyng and kunnyng Holi Scripture ȝeueth upon eny of the now seid gouernauncis, trouthes, and vertues, (that is to seie, upon eny gouernaunce, trouthe, and vertu of Goddis lawe to man, in to whos fynding, leernyng, and knowing mannis resoun may bi him silf aloon, or with natural helpis, rise and come,) mannis resoun may and can ȝeue the same leerning and knowing, as experience ther upon to be take anoon wole schewe; for thou canst not fynde oon such gouernaunce tauȝt in Holi Scripture to be doon, but that resoun techeth it lijk weel

and lijk fulli to be doon; and if thou wolt not trowe this, assigne thou summe suche and assaie. Wherfore folewith that of noon suche now seid gouernauncis the leernyng and knowing is had and taught bi Holi Scripture oonli or aloone; and therfore the ij^e^. premisse of the firste principal argument must needis be trewe.

And thanne ferther, thus: Sithen the bothe premissis of the first principal argument ben trewe, and the argument is formal, nedis muste the conclusioun concludid bi hem in the same arguyng be trewe, which is the bifore set first principal conclusioun.

The Paston Letters contain many very curious specimens of epistolary composition belonging to this and the preceding century. They are principally written by persons of rank and condition, but often betray a singular ignorance of the rules of grammar and orthography.

There is no doubt that English was now the almost universal spoken language of all classes of English society; but it does not even yet seem to have been regarded as a fit medium of formal communication in official circles. The first volume of Royal and Historical Letters during the reign of Henry IV.—the only volume yet published—embracing official correspondence from 1399 to 1400, contains upwards of sixty letters, reports, and other communications, the parties to which were English or Scotch. All these, with the exception of one in Scotch, and one and part of another in English, are in Latin or in French; laymen generally using the latter, while ecclesiastics commonly preferred the more learned language. It is, however, a singular fact, that two of Henry's ambassadors to France, Swynford and De Ryssheton, at a period when French was so commonly used in public documents in England, professed themselves as ignorant of that language as of Hebrew. 'Vestras litteras,' say they in a letter to the French Commissioners, dated October 21, 1404, 'scriptas in Gallico, nobis indoctis tanquam in idiomate Hebraico * * * recepimus.' These same persons write to Henry IV. in Latin, and in all probability their grammatical knowledge of English was about on a par with their attainments in French.

The solitary English letter in this volume is as follows:—

LORD GREY DE RUTHYN TO GRIFFITH AP DAVID AP GRIFFITH.

Gruffuth ap David ap Gruffuth.

We send the greting welle, but no thyng with goode hert.

And we have welle understande thy lettre to us sent by Deykus Vaghan, our tenaunt, which maken mention and seist that the fals John Weele hath disseyved the. And seist that alle men knowne welle that thu was under the protectioun of Mered ap Owyn, and sent to the as thu seist by trete of thy cousynes, Maester Edward, and Edwarde ap David, and asked the if thu woldest come inne, and he wolde gette the thy chartere of the Kyng, and that thu sholdest be Keyshate in Chirklond; and other thyngis he beheght the, which he fullfylled noght, as thu seiste; and after warde asked the whether thu woldest go over the see with him, and he wolde gette the thy chartere of the King, and bryng the to hym sounde and saufe, and thu sholdest have wages as moche as any gentelle man that went with hym. And overe thus thu seideist that John Welle seide befor the Bishope of Seint Assaph, and befor thy cousynes, that, rather than thu sholdest faile, he wolde spenne of his oun goode xx marcis.

Heer up on thu trusted, as thu seiste, and duddest gete the two men, and boght the armoure for alle peces, horsen, and other araie, and comest to Oswaldestree a nyght befor that thei went; and on the morowe after thu sendest Piers Cambř, the receyvour of Chirklonde, thries to hym, to telle hym that thu was redy, and he seide that thu sholdest speke no worde with him. And at the last he saide he hadde no wages for the, as thu seiste, and he hadde fully his retenue, and bade the goo to Sir Richarde Laken to loke whether he hadde nede of the other noo, with the which thu, as thu seiste, haddest nevere ado, ne nevere madest covenaunt with. For thu woldest, as thu seiste, have goon for no wages with hym over see, but for to have thy chartere of the Kyng, and sume lyvyng that thu myghtest dwelle in pees.

And, as thu seist, Sir Richard Laken and Straunge wolle berre wittenesse that thu was redy and wylly for to goon with hym giffe he hadde be trewe. And also thu seiste he cam to Laken and to Straunge and wolde have made hem to take the, and thu haddest wittyng ther of, as thu seiste, and trussed the fro thennes, and knowelechest that thy men cam and breeke our parke by nyght, and tooke out of hyt two of our horses, and of our menis.

And, as hit is tolde the, thu seiste, that we ben in pourpose to make our men brenne and slee in what so ever cuntree thu be inne, and wilt

withouten doute, as thu seiste, as many men as we slee and as many housen that we brenne for thy sake, as many brenne and slee for our sake. And, as thu seiste, thu wilt have bothe breede and ale of the best that is in our lordshipe; and heer of thu biddest us have no doute, the whiche is agayn our wylle, gife any thu have breede other ale so, and ther as thu berrest up on us that we sholde ben in pourpose to brenne and sleen men and housen for thy sake, or for any of thyn enclinant to the, or any of hem that ben the Kinges trewe liege men, we was nevere so mys avised to worch agayn the Kyng no his lawes, whiche giffe we dudde, were heigh tresoun; but thu hast hadde fals messageres and fals reportoures of us touchyng this matere; and that shalle be welle knowen un to the King and alle his Counsaile.

Ferthermore, ther as thu knowlechest by thyn oun lettre that thy men hath stolle our horsen out of our parke, and thu recettour of hem, we hoope that thu and thy men shalle have that ye have deserved. For us thynketh, thegh John Welle hath doon as thu aboven has certefied, us thynketh that that sholde noght be wroken towarde us. But we hoope we shalle do the a pryve thyng; a roope, a ladder, and a ring, heigh on gallowes for to henge. And thus shalle be your endyng. And he that made the be ther to helpyng, and we on our behalfe shalle be welle willyng. For thy lettre is knowlechyng.

Written, etc.

LECTURE XI.

THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE FROM CAXTON TO THE ACCESSION OF ELIZABETH.

THE importance of the invention of printing, startling and mysterious as it seemed, was very imperfectly appreciated by contemporary Europe. It was at first regarded only as an economical improvement, and in England it was slow in producing effects which were much more speedily realized on the Continent. In England, for a whole generation, its influence was scarcely perceptible in the increase of literary productivity, and it gave no sudden impulse to the study of the ancient tongues, though the printing-offices of Germany and Italy, and, less abundantly, of France, were teeming with editions of the Greek and Latin classics, as well as of the works of Gothic and Romance writers, new and old.

The press of Caxton, the first English printer, was in activity from 1474 to 1490. In these sixteen years, it gave to the world sixty-three* editions, among which there is not the text of a

* The whole number of productions issued by Caxton is stated, in the Appendix to the late reprint of The Game of the Chesse, by Mr. Vincent Figgins, at sixty-seven, three of which were printed before Caxton's return to England. Several of these were but pamphlets, or perhaps single sheets. They may be classed as follows: In French, two; in Latin, seven; two or three with Latin titles, but language of text not indicated in the list; the remainder in English. The only original works of native English authors are: The Chronicles of Englond, The Descripcioun of Britayne, The Polycronycon, Gower's Confessio Amantis, Chaucer's Tayles of Cantyrburye, Chaucer's and Lydgate's Minor Poems, Chaucer's Book of Fame, Troylus and Creseide, Lydgate's Court of Sapience, Lydgate's Lyf of our Ladye, and possibly one or two others. These, with the exception of the poems of Lydgate, and of Caxton's own additions to the works he published, all belong to the preceding century.

single work of classic antiquity, though there are a few translations of Greek and Latin authors, chiefly taken, however, at second hand from the French. Caxton printed a few ecclesiastical manuals, and a volume of parliamentary statutes, in Latin, and one or two works in French; but it does not satisfactorily appear that his press issued a single original work by a contemporary English author, if we except his own continuations of older works published by him. He rendered good service to his own generation, indeed, by printing editions of Chaucer, Gower and Lydgate, and thus disseminating the works of those authors through England; but it is very doubtful whether, in the end, the publication of those editions was not an injury, rather than a benefit, to the cause of later English literature.

It was Caxton's general practice, as appears from his own repeated avowals, to reduce the orthography and grammar, and sometimes even the vocabulary, of the authors he printed, to the usage of his own time, or rather to an arbitrary and not very uniform standard set up by himself. He had spent a large part of his life in Flanders and in France, where he established presses, and where he printed both in French and in Latin before undertaking any English work. His own style is full of Gallicisms in vocabulary and phrase, and there is very little doubt that his changes of his copy were much oftener corruptions than improvements.* In the preface to his second edition of the Canterbury Tales, he professes to have conformed to an approved manuscript; but this declaration evidently only negatives the addition or omission of verses, or, as he expresses it:

* The number of French words in Caxton's translations is large. In the second edition of the Game of the Chesse — believed to be the first book he printed in England — they are nearly three times as numerous, proportionately, as in the Morte d' Arthur printed by him, but translated by Malorye; and yet Malorye — whose general diction is perhaps more purely Anglo-Saxon than that of any English writer, except the Wycliffite translators, for at least a century before his age — adopted from his original many words which appear for the first time in English in his pages.

'setting in somme thynges that he [Chaucer] never sayd ne made, and leving out many thynges that he made, whyche ben requysite to be sette in it;' and we have no reason to doubt that in what he held to be minor matters, he practised in this case something of the same license as with other authors.*

The printing of a manuscript generally involves the destruction of the original; and there is little probability that any of those employed by Caxton escaped the usual fate of authors' copies. Besides this, the printing of a work greatly diminishes the current value of existing manuscripts of the same text, just as a new edition of a modern book often makes earlier impressions worthless. In Caxton's age, English scholars possessed no such critical acquaintance with their mother tongue, as to have the slightest notion of the great importance of scrupulously preserving the original texts of earlier writers; and hence Caxton's editions undoubtedly caused, not only the sacrifice of the manuscripts on which they were founded, but the neglect and destruction of many others, which might otherwise have

* The whole passage is as follows: 'Whiche book I have dylygently oversen, and duly examyned to the ende that it be made accordyng unto his owen makyng; for I fynde many of the sayd bookes, whiche wryters have abrydgyd it, and many thynges left out, and in some places have sette certayn versys that he never made ne sette in hys booke; of whyche bookes so incorrecte was one broughte to me vi. yere passyd, whiche I supposed had ben veray true and correcte, and accordyng to the same I dyde do enprynte a certayn nomber of them, whyche anon were solde to many and dyverse gentyl men, of whom one gentylman cam to me, and sayd that this book was not according in many places unto the book that Gefferey Chaucer had made. To whom I answered, that I had made it accordyng to my copye, and by me was nothing added ne mynushyd. Thenne he sayd, he knewe a book whyche hys fader had and moche lovyd, that was very trewe, and accordyng unto hys owen first book by hym made; and sayd more, yf I wold enprynte it agayn, he wold gete me the same book for a copye. How be it he wyst well that hys fader wold not gladly departe fro it. To whom I said, in caas that he coude gete me suche a book, trewe and correcte, yet I wold ones endevoyre me to enprynte it agayn, for to satisfy the auctour, where as tofore by ygnorauncc I erryd in hurtyng and dyffamyng his book in dyverce places, in setting in somme thynges that he never sayd ne made, and leving out many thynges that he made whyche ben requysite to be sette in it. And thus we fyll at accord, and he full gentylly gate of hys fader the said book, and delyvered it to me, by whiche I have corrected my book, as heere after alle alonge by the ayde of almighty God shal folowe, whom I humbly besecche &c.'

been saved to a period when their worth would have been better appreciated. This serves to explain how it is that we have older, better, and more numerous manuscripts of the Wycliffite versions of the Bible than of Chaucer; and, in a purely literary point of view, it is a cause of congratulation, rather than of regret, that Caxton never undertook the publishing of those translations. Had he done this, we should, in all probability, now possess only a corrupt printed text, and a few manuscripts of doubtful value; whereas the want of an early printed edition has insured the careful preservation of the codices, and the scholarship of this century has given us two complete and admirably edited ancient texts, with various readings from a great number of old and authentic copies.

The works of Pecock, as I have observed, show that in his hands the English theological prose dialect, though still substantially the same in grammatical form, had made a considerable advance upon Wycliffe in vocabulary, and more especially in the logical structure of period; and the poems of King James I. and of Lydgate exhibit, though in a less degree, increased affluence and polish of diction as compared with Chaucer. But in the secular prose of the fifteenth century we find few evidences of real progress; and in the productions of Caxton's press, which, as we have seen, generally bear his own ear-mark, little improvement is visible. For the every-day purposes of material life, and for the treatment of such poetic themes and the creation of such poetical forms as satisfied the taste of the English people, the language of England was very nearly sufficient, as Chaucer and his contemporaries had left it, and there was naturally little occasion for efforts at improvement in speech until new conditions of society and of moral and intellectual culture should create a necessity for it.

These new conditions, which were common to Great Britain and to the Continent, produced a visible effect upon the intellectual life of the latter long before they showed themselves as influential agencies in the literature of England. The insular

position of that country prevented the rapid spread of the new opinions and the new discoveries which originated in German and Romance Europe; and they were the slower in disseminating themselves among the English people, because France, the country with which England had the freest and most frequent communication, was behind Italy and Germany in availing itself of them.

The commercial and political relations between England on the one hand, and Germany and the Italian states on the other, were of no such closeness or importance as to create a reciprocal influence between them. The vernacular tongues of these latter were stranger to the Englishman than the speech of France, which was still, to a considerable extent, the language of English jurisprudence; and classical literature had not yet become so well known to English laymen as to make the Latin works of German and Italian literati readily intelligible to them. At the same time, a growing national hostility to France had gradually diminished the influence of French literature; and thus, from the end of the fourteenth century till near the close of the fifteenth, the English mind was left to its own unaided action, its own inherent resources, while all the other European states were territorially and politically so connected that they were constantly acting and reacting upon each other as enlivening and stimulating forces.

The civil wars of England had also an unfavourable effect upon English literature; for—though the moral excitement of periods of strife and revolution often begets a mental activity which, after the tumult of war is over, manifests itself in splendid intellectual achievement—it is as true of letters as of laws, that, for the time being, the clash of arms hushes their voice to silence.

Perhaps there is no better method of enabling the reader to form an idea of the condition in which Caxton found the English of his time, and the state to which he contributed to bring it, than by introducing extracts from the Morte d'Arthur

and from Caxton himself. The Morte d'Arthur is not, indeed, a work of English invention, nor, on the other hand, is it just to style it simply a translation. No continuous French original for it is known; but it is a compilation from various French romances, harmonized and connected so far as Malorye was able to make a consistent whole out of them, by supplying here and there links of his own forging.

In the introduction to the reprint of 1817, Southey says: 'The Morte d'Arthur is a compilation from some of the most esteemed romances of the Round Table. Had the volumes from which it is compiled existed in English, Sir Thomas Malory would not have thought of extracting parts from them, and blending them into one work. This was done at the best possible time: a generation earlier, the language would have retained too much of its Teutonic form; a generation later, and the task of translation would have devolved into the hands of men who performed it as a trade, and equally debased the work which they interpreted and the language in which they wrote.' This is very superficial criticism.

'A generation earlier' would have carried us back to the time of Pecock; 'a generation later' would have brought us down to that of Lord Berners, the translator of Froissart. If Pecock be taken as the standard of his age, I admit the language must be regarded as still retaining much more of its Teutonic *form* than it showed in the hands of Sir Thomas Malorye. But while Pecock was grammatically behind his age, he was rhetorically far in advance of it; and I am by no means certain that he could not have given us a better translation of the patchwork put together by Malorye than Malorye has done. On the other hand, I cannot admit that Lord Berners 'debased' either 'the work he interpreted' or 'the language in which he wrote,' in his sometimes slovenly, but always marvellously spirited, translation of the great chronicler Froissart.*

* I apply the epithet 'great' to Froissart advisedly. I know that critical investigators—tithers of mint and cumin—have detected errors of time and place

The narrative of the death of Arthur, which I take from the fifth chapter of the twenty-first book of the Morte d'Arthur, according to Southey's reprint of Caxton's edition of 1485, is a favourable specimen of Malorye's style. The proportion of French words, which does not exceed four per cent., is smaller than Malorye's general average; but it would be difficult to find any author of later date than the middle of the fourteenth century whose vocabulary is so 'Teutonic' as his: —

Therfore sayd Arthur vnto syr Bedwere, take thou Excalybur my good swerde and goo with it to yonder water syde, and whan thou comest there I charge the throwe my swerde in that water & come ageyn and telle me what thou there seest. My lord said Bedwere your commaundement shal be doon & lyghtly brynge you worde ageyn. So syr Bedwere departed, & by the waye he behelde that noble swerde

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in his chronology and his geography; and no doubt he has sometimes ascribed, to an insignificant and forgotten John, quaint words and hard knocks which were really spoken and given by an equally insignificant and forgotten Peter. But his canvas shows no false colouring, no want of keeping, no confusion of costume; and the incidents he narrates, if not always true of the persons whom he introduces as parties to them, were, in general, true of *somebody*, or — which comes to the same thing — might have been so, without any violation of the proprieties of nature.

Turner did not hesitate to introduce into his landscapes a tree — if necessary for his lights, and shades, and distances — where nature had blunderingly left it out, or some ruthless woodman cut it down. But there is this difference between the two artists: the painter deliberately invented the missing object, and painted it in; the chronicler simply admitted that which was narrated to him, if his instincts told him it was probable and apposite, without very scrupulously inquiring into its exact historical truth.

Without Froissart, we might construct a skeleton history of the fourteenth century — a plot of the drama which should be more exact in the mechanical shifting of the scenes than his narrative — but the dramatis personæ would be wired skeletons also, with no pulse in their arteries, no 'speculation in the eyes they glare with.'

A modern historian, writing the annals of Froissart's time, would certainly omit the story of the 'Lorde of Corasse's' familiar spirit Orton, and, in speaking of the island of Cephalonia, would fail to inform us that 'the fayry and the nympes be moche conuersaunt there;' but Froissart's mixture of the truth and the fable which intermixed themselves in the life of his time, makes us more intimately acquainted with the man and woman of the fourteenth century than we could become by the study of true annals in one volume, and of a learned essay on popular superstitions in another.

that the pomel & the hafte was al of precyous stones, & thenne he sayd to hym self yf I throwe this ryche swerde in the water therof shal neuer come good but harme & losse. And thenne syr bedwere hydde excalybur vnder a tree. And so as sone as he myght he came ageyn vnto the kyng and sayd he had ben at the water and had throwen the swerde in to the water. What sawe thou there sayd the kyng, syr he sayd I sawe no thynge but wawes and wyndes. That is vntrewly sayd of the sayd the kynge. Therfore goo thou lyghtelye ageyn and do my commaundemente as thou arte to me leef & dere spare not but throwe it in. Than syr bedwere retorned ageyn & took the swerde in hys hande, and than hym thought synne and shame to throwe awaye that nobyl swerde, and so efte he hydde the swerde and retorned ageyn and tolde to the kyng that he had ben at the water and done his commaundemente. What sawe thou there sayd the kyng. Syr he sayd I sawe no thynge but the waters wappe and wawes wanne. A traytour vntrewe sayd kyng Arthur now hast thou betrayed me twyse. Who wold haue wente that thou that hast been to me so leef and dere and thou arte named a noble knyghte and wold betraye me for the richesse of the swerde. But now goo ageyn lyghtly for thy longe taryeng putteth me in grete jeopardye of my lyf. For I haue taken colde, and but yf thou do now as I byd the, yf euer I may see the I shal slee the (wyth) myn owne handes, for thou woldest for my ryche swerde see me dede. Thenne Syr Bedwere departed and wente to the swerde and lyghtly took hit up, and wente to the water syde and there he bounde the gyrdyl aboute the hyltes, and thenne he threwe the swerde as farre in to the water as he myght, & there cam an arme and a hande aboue the water and mette it, & caught it and so shoke it thryse and braundysshed, and than vanysshed awaye the hande wyth the swerde in the water. So syr Bedwere came ageyn to the kyng and tolde hym what he sawe. Alas sayd the kyng helpe me hens for I drede me I haue taryed ouer longe. Than syr Bedwere toke the kyng vpon his backe and so wente wyth hym to that water syde; & whan they were at the water syde, euyn fast by the banke houed a lytyl barge wyth many fayr ladyes in hit, & emonge hem al was a quene, and al they had blacke hoodes, and al they wepte and shryked whan they sawe Kyng Arthur.

Now put me in to the barge, sayd the kyng and so he dyd softelye. And there receyued hym thre quenes wyth grete mornyng and soo they sette hem doun, and in one of their lappes kyng Arthur layd hys heed, and than that quene sayd, a dere broder why haue ye taryed so longe from me. Alas this wounde on your heed hath caught ouermoche colde. And soo than they rowed from the londe, and syr bedwere

behelde all tho ladyes goo from hym. Than syr bedwere cryed a my lord Arthur what shal become of me now ye goo from me. And leue me here allone emonge myn enemyes. Comfort thy self sayd the kyng and doo as wel as thou mayst, for in me is no truste for to truste in. For I wyl in to the vale of auylyon to hele me of my greuous wounde. And yf thou here neuer more of me praye for my soule, but euer the quenes and the ladyes wepte and shryched that hit was pyte to here. And assone as syr Bedwere had loste the syght of the baarge he wepte and waylled and so took the foreste, and so he wente al that nyght and in the mornyng he was ware betwixte two holtes hore of a chapel and an ermytage.

Caxton's introduction to the Morte d'Arthur is rather more thickly sprinkled with French and Latin words than his ordinary writing, but it is, upon the whole, a fair sample of his style and diction, which, it will be observed, contrasts strongly with the Saxon-English of Malorye: —

After that I had accomplysshed and fynysshed dyuers hystoryes as wel of contemplacyon as of other hystoryal and worldly actes of grete conquerours & prynces. And also certeyn bookes of ensaumples and doctryne. Many noble and dyuers gentylmen of thys royame of Englond camen and demaunded me many and oftymes, wherfore that I haue not do made & enprynte the noble hystorye of the saynt greal, and of the moost renomed crysten Kyng. Fyrst and chyef of the thre best crysten and worthy, kyng Arthur, whyche ought moost to be remembred emonge vs englysshe men tofore al other crysten kynges. For it is notoyrly knowen thorugh the vnyuersal world, that there been ix worthy & the best that euer were. That is to wete thre paynyms, thre Jewes and thre crysten men. As for the paynyms they were tofore the Incarnacyon of Cryst, whiche were named, the fyrst Hector of Troye, of whome thystorye is comen bothe in balade and in prose. The second Alysaunder the grete, & the thyrd Julyus Cezar Emperour of Rome of whome thystoryes ben wel kno and had. And as for the thre Jewes whyche also were tofore thyncarnacyon of our lord of whome the fyrst was Duc Josue whyche brought the chyldren of Israhel in to the londe of byheste. The second Dauyd kyng of Jherusalem, & the thyrd Judas Machabeus of these thre the byble reherceth al theyr noble hystoryes & actes. And sythe the sayd Incarnacyon haue ben thre noble crysten men stalled and admytted thorugh the vnyuersal world in to the nombre of the ix beste & worthy, of whome was fyrst the noble Arthur whose

noble actes I purpose to wryte in thys present book here folowyng. The second was Charlemayn or Charles the grete, of whome thystorye is had in many places bothe in frensshe and englysshe, and the thyrd and last was Godefray of boloyn, of whose actes & life I made a book vnto thexcellent prynce and kyng of noble memorye kyng Edward the fourth, the sayd noble Jentylmen instantly requyred me temprynte thystorye of the sayd noble kyng and conquerour king Arthur, and of his knyghtes wyth thystorye of the saynt greal, and of the deth and endyng of the sayd Arthur. Affermyng that I ouzt rather tenprynet his actes and noble feates, than of godefroye of boloyne, or any of the other eyght, consyderyng that he was a man born wythin this royame and kyng and Emperour of the same.

And that there ben in frensshe dyuers and many noble volumes of his actes, and also of his knyghtes. To whome I answered, that dyuers men holde oppynyon, that there was no suche Arthur, and that alle suche bookes as been maad of hym, ben but fayned and fables, by cause that somme cronyeles make of hym no mencyon ne remembre hym noo thynge ne of his knyghtes. Wherto they answered, and one in specyal sayd, that in hym that shold say or thynke, that there was neuer suche a kyng callyd Arthur, myght wel be aretted grete folye and blyndenesse. For he sayd that there were many euydences of the contrarye. Fyrst ye may see his sepulture in the monasterye of Glastyngburye. And also in polycronycon in the v book the syxte chappytre, and in the seuenth book the xxiii chappytre where his body was buryed and after founden and translated in to the sayd monasterye, ye shal se also in thystorye of bochas in his book *de casu principum*, parte of his noble actes, and also of his falle. Also galfrydus in his brutysshe book recounteth his lyf, and in diuers places of Englond, many remembraunces ben yet of hym and shall remayne perpetuelly, and also of his knyghtes. Fyrst in the abbey of Westmestre at saynt Edwardes shryne remayneth the prynte of his seal in reed waxe closed in beryll. In whych is wryton *Patricius Arthurus, Britannie, Gallie, Germanie, dacie, Imperator.* Item in the castel of douer ye may see Gauwayns skulle, & Cradoks mantel. At Wynchester the rounde table, in other places Launcelottes swerde and many other thynges. Thenne al these thynges consydered there can no man reasonably gaynsaye but there was a kyng of thys lande named Arthur. For in al places crysten and hethen he is reputed and taken for one of the ix worthy. And the fyrst of the thre Crysten men. And also he is more spoken of beyonde the see moo bookes made of his noble actes than there be in englond as wel in duche ytalyen spanysshe and grekysshe as in frensshe. And yet of record re-

mayne in wytnesse of hym in Wales in the toune of Camelot the grete stones & meruayllous werkys of yron lyeng vnder the grounde & ryal vautes which dyuers now lyuyng hath seen. Wherfor it is a meruayl why he is no more renomed in his owne contreye, sauf onelye it accordeth to the word of god, whyche sayth that no man is accept for a prophete in his owne contreye. Theñe all these thynges forsayd aledged I coude not wel denye, but that there was suche a noble kyng named arthur and reputed one of the ix worthy & fyrst & cheyf of the cristen men, & many noble volumes be made of hym & of his noble knyȝtes in frensshe which I haue seen & redde beyonde the see which been not had in our maternal tongue, but in walsshe ben many & also in frensshe, & somme in englysshe but no wher nygh alle. Wherfore suche as haue late ben drawen oute bryefly in to englysshe, I haue after the symple connyng that god hath sente to me, vnder the fauour and correctyon of al noble lordes and gentylmen enprysed to enprynte a book of the noble hystoryes of the sayd kynge Arthur, and of certeyn of his knyghtes after a copye vnto me delyuerd, whyche copye Syr Thomas Malorye dyd take oute of certeyn bookes of frensshe and reduced it in to Englysshe. And I accordyng to my copye haue doon sette it in enprynte, to the entente that the noble men may see and lerne the noble acts of chyualrye, the jentyl and vertuous dedes that somme knyghtes vsed in tho dayes, by whyche they came to honour, and how they that were vycious were punysshed and ofte put to shame and rebuke, humbly bysechyng al noble lordes and ladyes wyth al other estates of what estate or degree they been of, that shal see and rede in this sayd book and werke, that they take the good and honest actes in their remembraunce, and to folowe the same. Wherin they shalle fynde many joyous and playsaunt hystoryes and noble & renomed actes of humanyte, gentylnesse and chyualryes. For herein may be seen noble chyualrye, Curtosye, Humanyte, frendlynesse, hardynesse, loue, frendshyp, Cowardyse, Murdre, hate, vertue, and synne. Doo after the good and leue the euyl, and it shal brynge you to good fame and renommee. And for to passe the tyme this book shal be plesaunte to rede in, but for to giue fayth and byleue that al is trewe that is conteyned herin, ye be at your lyberte, but al is wryton for our doctryne, and for to beware that we falle not to vyce ne synne, but texcercyse and folowe vertu, by whyche we may come and atteyne to good fame and renommee in thys lyf, and after thys shorte and transytorye lyf to come vnto euerlastyng blysse in heuen, the whyche he graunt vs that reygneth in heuen the blessyd Trynyte, Amen.

But the period was at hand when the four great events

I mentioned in the last lecture were to exert upon England the full strength of their united influence; and I shall now endeavour to point out the effects they produced during the first half of the sixteenth century, though I shall not have space always to distinguish between these effects as referable to this or that particular cause, or to describe specifically the different modes in which those causes acted. It must suffice, for the present, to say that the influence of them all was in one and the same direction. They all tended to promote a wider and more generous culture, a freer and bolder spirit of investigation, a more catholic and cosmopolitan view of the mutual relations of different branches of the human family, a deeper insight into the secrets of this mysterious life of ours, and a range of the imagination corresponding to the vastly enlarged field of observation which was now opened to the vision of men.

I have repeatedly spoken of the diction of theology and religion in England, as having always been in a more advanced state of culture than that of secular prose. This continued to be the relation of the two dialects, not only through the period to which my sketches extend, but until after the Restoration of Charles II. From that epoch, theology declined in general estimation, and was no longer regarded as a necessary study for laymen of finished education. Its dialect was of course neglected, and in the space of a single generation it lost, and has never since recovered, its ancient superiority over the tongue of secular life.

An extract from a sermon delivered by Bishop Fisher in 1509, in memory of the Countess of Derby, mother of King Henry VII., will serve to show the character and condition of the language when employed for solemn and religious purposes at this period:—

This holy Goſpel late red contayneth in it a Dyalogue, that is to ſay a Commynication betwixt the Woman of bleſſyd Memory, called Mártha, and our Savyour Jheſu. Which Dyalogue I would apply unto this noble Prynces late deceaſyd, in whoſe remembrance this office and

obſervances be done at this time. And thre thyngs by the leave of God I will entende. Firſt, to ſhew wherein this Prynces may well be lykned and compared unto the bleſſyd Woman Martha. Second, how ſhe may complain unto our Savyour Jheſu for the paynful dethe of her body, like as Martha dyd for the dethe of her Broder Lazarus. Thyrde, the comfortable Anſwere of our Savyour Jheſu unto her again. In the firſt ſhall ſtand her prayſe and commendation; In the ſecounde, our mournynge for the grete loſs of hyrr; In the thyrd, our comfort again.

Fyrſt I ſay, the comparyſon of them two may be made in four thyngs; In nobleneſs of Perſon, In diſcypline of their Bodys, In orderyng of their Souls to God, In Hoſpytalytyes kepping, and charytable dealyng to their Neighbours. In which four, the noble Woman Martha (as ſay the Doctors, entreatynge this Goſpel and hyr Lyfe) was ſingularly to be commended and prayſed: wherefore let us conſider lykewiſe, whether in this noble Counteſſe may ony thynge like be founde.

Firſte, the bleſſed Martha was a woman of noble blode, to whom by inherytance belonged the Caſtle of Bethany; and this nobleneſs of blode they have, which deſcended of noble Lynage. Beſide this, there is a nobleneſs of maners, withouten which, the nobleneſs of blode is moche defaced, for as Boecius ſayth, if oughte be good in the nobleneſs of blode, it is for that thereby the noble men and women ſholde be aſhamed, to go out of kynde, from the vertuous maners of their auncetrye before. Yet alſo there is another nobleneſſe, which aryſeth in every Perſon, by the goodneſſe of nature, whereby full often ſuch as come of ryghte pore and unnoble Fader and Moder, have grete ableteeſ of nature to noble dedes. Above all the ſame, there is a foure maner of nobleneſſe, which may be called, an encreaſed nobleneſſe, as by marryage and affynyte of more noble perſons; ſuch as were of leſſe condycyon, may encreaſe in hygher degree of nobleneſſe.

In every of theſe, I ſuppoſe, this Counteſſe was noble. Fyrſt, ſhe came of noble blode, lyneally deſcendyng of Kynge Edward the 3d. within the foure degree of the ſame. Her Fader was Johan Duke of Somerſet, her Moder was called Margarete, ryghte noble as well in maners, as in blode, to whom ſhe was a veray Daughter in all noble maners, for ſhe was bounteous and lyberal to every Perſon of her knowledge or acquaintance. Avarice and Covetyſe ſhe moſt hated, and ſorowed it full moche in all perſons, but ſpecially in ony, that belong'd unto her. She was alſo of ſyngular Eaſyneſs to be ſpoken unto, and full curtayſe anſwere ſhe would make to all that came unto her. Of mervayllous gentyleneſs ſhe was unto all folks, but ſpecially unto her owne, whom ſhe truſted and loved ryghte tenderly. Unkynde ſhe

wolde not be unto no creature, ne forgetfull of ony kyndneſs or ſervyce done to her before, which is no lytel part of veray nobleneſs. She was not vengeable, ne cruell, but redy anone to forgete and forgyve injuryes done unto her, at the leeſt deſyre or mocyon made unto her for the ſame. Mercyfull alſo and pyteous ſhe was unto ſuch, as was grevyed and wrongfully troubled, and to them that were in Poverty, or ſekeneſs, or any other myſery.

To God and to the Chirche full obedient and tractable. Serchynge his honour and pleſure full beſyly. A wareneſs of her ſelf ſhe had alway to eſchewe every thyng, that myght diſhoneſt ony noble Woman, or diſtayne her honour, in ony condycyon. Fryvelous thyngs, that were lytell to be regarded, ſhe wold let paſs by, but the other, that were of weyght and ſubſtance, wherein ſhe myght proufyte, ſhe wolde not let for ony payne or labour, to take upon hande. Theſe and many other ſuch noble condycyons, left unto her by her Ancetres, ſhe kept and encreaſed therein, with a greate dylygence.

The third nobleneſs alſo ſhe wanted not, which I ſayd, was the nobleneſs of Nature. She had in a maner all that was prayſable in a Woman, either in Soul or Body. Fyrſt, ſhe was of ſingular Wiſedom ferre paſſyng the comyn rate of women. She was good in remembraunce and of holdyng memorye, a redye wytte ſhe had alſo to conceive all thyngs, albeit they were ryghte derke: Right ſtudious ſhe was in Bokes, which ſhe had in grete number, both in Englyſh and in Frenſhe, and for her exerciſe and for the profyte of others, ſhe did tranſlate divers maters of Devocyon out of the Frenſh into Englyſh. Full often ſhe complayned, that in her youthe, ſhe had not given her to the underſtanding of Latin, wherein ſhe had a lytell perceyvyng, ſpecyally of the Rubryſhe of the Drdynall, for the ſaying of her Servyce, which ſhe did well underſtand. Hereunto in favour, in words, in geſture, in every demeanour of herſelf ſo grete nobleneſs did appear, that what ſhe ſpake or dyde, it mervaylloufly became her.

The most important English work of the first quarter of the sixteenth century, whether as a philological monument, or as a production which could not have failed to exert an influence on the tone of English literature, is Lord Berners's Translation of the Chronicles of Froissart, the first volume of which was published in 1523, the second in 1525. Lord Berners had been distinguished in military and civil life, in which he continued actively engaged until he returned from a mission to Spain in

[illegible]

[illegible] between Henry VIII. and Francis I.—of which [illegible] a profession was made at the [illegible] of the Cloth of Gold in 1520—Henry was [illegible] the [illegible] bestowed on him by the Papal [illegible] for his Treatise on the Seven Sacraments, into a secret league with Pope Leo X. and Charles V., then King of Spain, [illegible] emperor, against Francis I. This alliance was [illegible] in November 1521, and in the summer of 1522 Henry commenced hostilities against France. The extravagant prodigality of the English prince in royal festivities and [illegible] expenditures, had exhausted the treasures which the avarice of his father had accumulated, and he was obliged to resort to the most burdensome and unjust measures to replenish his exchequer and prepare for the foreign war in which he was about to engage.

It is a not improbable conjecture, that the hope of reconciling the English people to the expenses and sacrifices of a war with France was a prominent motive with the king for desiring a translation of Froissart to appear at this time. However this may be, few things could have been better calculated to accomplish this object than the brilliant and picturesque sketches given, by the most delightful of chroniclers, of the exploits of the Black Prince, and of the other numerous

instances of heroic daring and chivalrous achievement with which his spirited pages glitter. A large part of France was the undoubted patrimony of the Norman dynasty in England, and there had been questionable claims to other still more extensive provinces. The revival of the memory of these asserted rights might be expected to have, by appealing to the interests and the pride of England, a powerful effect in exciting the ambition of the people, and inducing them cheerfully to submit to the new burdens which a war with France would impose upon them.

Lord Berners's translation of Froissart was the first really important work printed in the English language, relating to modern history. It was almost the only accessible source of information respecting the local history of England, and her relations to the Continental powers, in the fourteenth century; for though the scene is for the most part laid in France and Spain, yet it contains a pretty full account of the wars of Edward III. with the Scots, and of the insurrectionary movements in the time of Richard II.; and, moreover, England was a direct party to almost every event which it narrates as belonging more immediately to the domestic history of France or of Spain.

The entire subject, then, was one of special interest to the English people, and the extraordinary literary merit and the popular character of the work eminently fitted it, both to initiate Englishmen into a knowledge of some of the principal epochs of their own national life, and to promote a taste for historical reading and composition. It must, therefore, independently of its philological worth, be considered as a work of great importance in English literary history, because it undoubtedly contributed essentially to give direction to literary pursuits in England, and thus to lay the foundation of an entire and very prominent branch of native literature.

It was soon followed by a considerable number of new English histories, such as those of Hall and Fabian, and by editions and continuations of earlier annalists, as, for example,

of Hardynge; and we are therefore probably indebted for these, such as they are, and in some degree even for the more valuable compilation of Holinshed, to the impulse given to historical studies by the publication of Lord Berners's Froissart.

The translation is executed with great skill; for while it is faithful to the text, it adheres so closely to the English idiom that it has altogether the air of an original work, and, with the exception of here and there a single phrase, it would not be easy to find a passage which exhibits decisive internal evidence of having been first composed in a foreign tongue.

The account of the origin of the great schism in the fourteenth century is as follows:—

Anon after the dethe of the pope Gregory, the cardynalles drew them into the conclaue, in the palays of saynt Peter. Anone after, as they were entred to chose a pope, acordyng to their vsage, such one as shuld be good and profytable for holy churche, the romayns assembled thē togyder in a great nombre, and came into the bowrage of saynt Peter: they were to the nombre of xxx. thousand what one and other, in the entent to do yuell, if the mater went nat accordynge to their appetytes. And they came oftentymes before the conclaue, and sayd, Harke, ye sir cardynalles, delyuer you atones, and make a pope; ye tary to longe; if ye make a romayne, we woll nat chaung him; but yf ye make any other, the romayne people and counsayles woll nat take hym for pope, and ye putte yourselfe all in aduenture to be slayne. The cardynals, who were as than in the danger of the romayns, and herde well those wordes, they were nat at their ease, nor assured of their lyues, and so apeased them of their yre as well as they myght with fayre wordes; but somoche rose the felony of the romayns, y^t suche as were next to ye conclaue, to thentent to make the cardynalles afrayde, and to cause them to cōdiscende the rather to their opinyons, brake vp the dore of the conclaue, whereas the cardynalles were. Than the cardynalles went surely to haue been slayne, and so fledde away to saue their lyues, some one waye and some another; but the romayns were nat so content, but toke them and put them togyder agayn, whether they wolde or nat. The cardynalles than seynge thē-selfe in the daunger of the romayns, and in great parell of their lyues, agreed among themselfe, more for to please the people than for any deuocyon; howbeit, by good electyon they chase an holy man, a cardynall of the romayne nacion, whome pope Vrbayne the fyfte had

made cardynall, and he was called before, the cardynall of saynt Peter. This electyon pleased greatly ye romayns, and so this good man had all the ryghtes that belonged to the papalite; howebeit he lyued nat but thre dayes after, and I shall shewe you why. The romayns, who desyred a pope of their owne nacion, were so ioyfull of this newe pope, y^t they toke hym, who was a hundred yere of age, and sette hym on a whyte mule, and so ledde him vp and doune through ye cytie of Rome, exaltyng him, and shewyng howe they had vāquesshed the cardynals, seyng they had a pope romayn accordyng to their owne ententes, in so moche that the good holy man was so sore traueyled that he fell syck, and so dyed the thyrde daye, and was buryed in the churche of saynt Peter, and there he lyethe.—Reprint of 1812, vol. i. pp. 510, 511.

Of the dethe of this pope, the cardynalles were right sorowfull, for they saw well howe the mater shulde nat goo well to passe: for they had thought if y^t pope had lyued, to haue dissimuled amonge the romayns for two or thre yeres, and at the laste to haue brought the see apostolyke into some other place than at Rome, at Napoles, or at Gennes, out of the daunger of the romayns: but ye dethe of the pope brake their purpose. Than the cardynalles went agayne into the conclaue in greater daūger than they were in before, for ye romayns assembled them togyder agayne before the conclaue, and made semblant to breke it vp, and to slee them all, if they dyde nat chose a pope acordyng to their myndes, and cryed to the cardynalles, and sayd, Sirs, aduyse yowe well: if ye delyuer vs a pope romayne we be content, or els we woll make your heedes reeder than your hattes be: suche wordes and manasshes abasshed greatly ye cardynals, for they hadde rather a dyed confessours than martyrs. Than to brynge themselfe out of that daunger and parell, they made a pope, but he was none of the colledge of cardynals, he was archbysshop of Bare, a great clerke, who greatly had traueyled for the welthe of holy churche; with his promocyon of popalyte, the romayns were apeased, for the cardynall of Genne put out his heed out at a wyndowe of the conclaue, and sayd on hygh to ye people of Rome, Sirs, apease you, for you haue a pope romayne, and that is Bartylmewe des Angles, archbysshop of Bare: the people aunswered all with one voyce, than we be content; the same archebysshoppe was nat as than at Rome, I thynke he was in Napoles. Than he was incontynent sent for, of the whiche tydynges he was ryght glad, and so came to Rome; and at his comyng there was great feest made to hym; and so he had all the ryghtes that parteyned to the papalyte, and was called Vrban the sixt of that name: the romayns had great ioy: his creacyon was signified to all the churches of cristentie, and also to

emperours, kynges, dukes, and erles; and the cardynalles sent worde to all their frendes, that he was chosen by good and trewe electyon; howbeit, some of them repented them after, that they had spoken so largely in the mater. This pope renounced all graces gyuen before, and so dyuers departed fro their countres and places, and went to Rome to haue grace.—Vol. i. p. 511.

It hath ben long sithe I spake of holy church; now I wyll retourne therto, the mater requyreth it. Ye haue well herde here before, howe by the exortacyon of the romayns, the cardynalles, who as than raygned, to apease the people of Rome, who were greatly moued against thē, made a pope of the archbysshoprike of Bari, called before Bartylmewe des Angles: he receyued the papalyte, and was called Vrbayne the sixe, and so opyned grace as the vsage was. Thentencyon of dyuers of ye cardynals was, y^t^ whan they myght se a better hour and tyme, they wolde agayn retourne to their election, bycause this pope was nat profytable for them, nor also to the church as they said, for he was a fumisshe man and malincolyous; so that whā he sawe hymselfe in prosperyte and in puyssance of the papalyte, and that dyuers kynges cristned were ioyned to him, and wrote to him, and dyde put them vnder his obeysaunce, whereof he waxed proude and worked all on heed, and wolde haue taken away fro ye cardynals dyuers of their rightes and olde customes, the whiche greatly displeased them: and so they spake togyder, and ymagined howe he was nat well worthy to gouerne the worlde; wherfore they purposed to choose another pope, sage and discrete, by whom the churche shulde be well gouerned. To this purpose the cardynals putte to all their payne, and specially he y^t^ was after chosen to be pope: thus all a somer they wer in this purpose; for they that entended to make a newe pope durst nat shewe their myndes generally, bycause of the romayns; so that in the tyme of the vacacyon in the courte, dyuers cardynals departed fro Rome, and went about Rome to sport thē in dyuers places at their pleasure. And pope Vrbane went to another cytie called Tyeulle, and ther he lay a long season, in this vacacion tyme, whiche myght nat longe endure: for at Rome ther were many clerkes of sūdrie places of the worlde, abydinge for graces, the whiche was promysed to dyuers of them. Than the cardynals all of one acorde assembled togyder, and their voyces rested on sir Robert of Genesue, somtyme sonne to the erle of Genesue. His first promocyon was, he was bysshoppe of Therouene, and after bysshoppe of Cambrey, and he was called cardynal of Genesue. At this election were the most parte of the cardynals, and he was called Clement.—p. 547.

Lord Berners's orthography is irregular and confused; but this is probably, in a considerable degree, the fault of he printers, who at that time were generally Germans or Dutchmen, little acquainted with English. His syntax is marked by archaisms, such as the use of the form in *-th* in the third person singular present indicative, and not unfrequently in the plural and in the imperative; and his style, like that of other secular compositions up to this period, is much less advanced in philological development than the diction of contemporaneous theological literature, or, with the exception of an inflection or two, even than that of Pecock, who lived three quarters of a century earlier. The difference, however, between Lord Berners and Fisher, from whom I have given an extract, is not wholly owing to the superior culture of the theological dialect, but partly to the fact that Lord Berners wrote in advanced life. His style, though more idiomatic than most of the productions of Caxton's press, had probably been formed by the perusal of those works, and the long years he had spent in camp and council had allowed him no leisure to keep up with the later philological improvement of his native tongue.

There is another historical work of the first half of the sixteenth century, the style of which exhibits a later phase of the language than Lord Berners's Froissart, or than any other secular prose composition of its own period: I refer to the celebrated Life of Richard III., ascribed to Sir Thomas More, which first appeared anonymously in Grafton's edition of Hardynge's Chronicle, printed in 1543.* In this edition it was, in all probability, modernized to the standard of the times, and I strongly suspect that this process was carried farther still by Rastell, who published More's works in 1557. Rastell, indeed, complains that the text, as given by Grafton in Hardynge, and in Hall's Chronicle, is 'very muche corrupte in many places, sometyme hauyng lesse, and sometime hauing more, and altered in wordes and whole sentences: muche varying from the copie

* See First Series, Lecture VI. p. 124.

of his own hand, by which thys is printed;' but I find it difficult to believe that either the orthography or the syntax of Rastell's edition is that of the year 1513, when the work is alleged to have been 'written,' though left 'unfinished.'*

Although the historical value of this work is questionable, it is of much philological importance, because it is indisputably the best English secular prose which had yet been written. The excellence of its style is such as an Englishman in that age could have attained only by a familiar acquaintance with the more advanced diction of the theological literature of the English language. This acquaintance More certainly possessed in a high degree, but his own controversial writings are inflamed by a passion which destroyed his mastery over self, and betrayed him, not only into hasty and violent expression, but into a confusion of thought which is remarkable in a man otherwise so clear-headed.†

More became a madman the moment he approached the question of religious reform.‡ He wished to have it engraved

* See Longer Notes and Illustrations, I., at the end of this lecture.

† A striking instance of this will be found in the First Series, Lecture XXVI. p. 581.

‡ His opponents declared that he delighted in worrying those unsound in the faith, and that, not content with the torture scientifically applied, in pursuance of his orders, by the regular professors of that art attached to the prisons, he set up an amateur inquisition in his own garden, where he used to tie persons suspected of heresy to a tree, which he jocosely called the Tree of Life, and have them soundly whipped, after which he accompanied them to the Tower to see them racked secundum artem. All this More denies, and it is fair to let him have the benefit of his traverse in his own words. 'Dyuers of them,' says he, 'haue sayd that of suche as were in my howse whyle I was chauncellour, I vsed to examyne them wyth turmentes, causynge them to be boūden to a tre in my gardyn, and there pituously beten. * * * For of very trouth, albe it that for a great robbery or a heyghnouse murder, or sacryledge in a chyrche, wyth caryenge away the pyxe wyth the blessed sacrament, or vylanously castynge it out, I caused some tyme such thynges to be done by some offycers of the marshalsy or of some other prysōs wyth whyche orderynge of them by theyr well deserued payne, & wythout any greate hurte that afterwarde sholde stycke by them, I founde out and repressed many suche desperate wreches, as ellys had not fayled to haue gone ferther abrode, & to haue done to many good folke a gret deale mych more harme; yet though I so dyd ī theues, murderers, and robbers of chyrches, and *notwythstandynge also that heretykes be yet mych worse then al they*, yet sauyng onely theyr sure kepynge, I neuer dyd els cause any such thyng to be

on his tombstone that he was '*Furibus, Homicidis, Hæreticisque molestus*,' the scourge of Thieves, Murderers, and Heretics, capping the climax with the heretic, as the greatest malefactor of the three. But More is not the only public functionary who has desired that his funeral monument should perpetuate the infamy of his most criminal abuses of power.*

We ought not to expect to find, in the controversial writings of a man inspired by such furious passions, models of elegance or correctness of style, and accordingly it is only in the Life of Richard III. that More seems to deserve the praise so often bestowed upon him as one of the first great English prose writers.†

More's Life of Richard III. is found not only in the complete edition of his works published in 1557, but in Hardynge, Hall, and Holinshed. It is, therefore, readily accessible, and it has been so often quoted as to be in some degree familiar to all students of English literature. I prefer, therefore, to illustrate his style by an extract from some of his less known writings; and I select, for that purpose, the rarest of them all, the

done to any of them all in all my lyfe.'—The Apologye of syr Thomas More, knyght, 1533, fs. 195, 196 (Collected Works, edition of 1557, p. 901). He then proceeds to state two exceptions where he admits that he applied corporal chastisement, one to 'a chylde and a seruaunt' in his own house, for speaking and teaching 'vngracyouse heresye agaynst the blessed sacrament of the aulter,' and another where the same discipline was administered to a half-insane person for gross indecency of behaviour at public worship. He proceeds: 'And of all that euer came in my hande for heresy, as helpe me God, sauynge as I sayd the sure keping of them, and yet not so sure neyther but that George Constantyne coulde stele awaye; ellys had neuer any of them any strype or stroke gyuē them, so mych as a fylyppe on the forhed.' More's method of 'sure keping' of persons charged with heresy, it appears, was to confine them in the stocks in his garden, where the inconvenience they endured from exposure to the weather, and from the painful mode by which they were secured, was, of itself, a torture as inhuman as the infliction of the rod. Upon the whole, then, his own evidence convicts him of being an uncharitable hater and a cruel persecutor of those who differed from him in religious opinion.

* James Buchanan is said to have expressed the wish that the word 'LECOMPTON' might be carved on the slab which should cover his grave.

† See, on the authorship of this work, First Series, Lecture VI. p. 124.

unpaged leaf between pp. 1138 and 1139 of Rastell's edition, which is wanting in very many copies:—

After that sir Thomas More hadde caused to be printed this laste booke (intitled: the answer to the first parte of the poysoned boke, which a namelesse heretike hath named the supper of the lord) he wrote and caused to bee printed in the ende thereof (after certaine correccions of faultes escaped in the printyng thereof) this that followeth:

Sir Thomas More knighte
to the christen reader.

After these faultes of the printer escaped in this boke, I shall not let, good reders, to geue you like warnynge of one faute of myne owne, escaped me in my booke laste put forth of the debellacion of Salem and Byzance. In ye first chapter wherof (Numero. 933. and in the seconde colume) cancell and putte out one of those ouersightes that I lay to ye pacifier, in those ix lines, of which the first is the II line of ye same colume, and the last is the 19 (the first of which 9 lines beginneth thus: Moreouer &c.). For of trouthe not the pacifier but myselfe was ouersene in that place wyth a litle hast in misse remēbring one worde of his. For whereas he sayth in the parson of Byzance, in the third lefe of Salem and Bizance: 'I wil cause it to be writen into this dyaloge worde for worde as it is come to my handes:' I forgate whā I answered it that he said, 'as it is come,' and toke it as though he sayde 'as it commeth to myne handes.'

And therfore albeit that I haue knowen many that haue red it, of which I neuer found any that found it, yet sythe it happed me lately to looke theron, and find mine ouersight my self, I wold in no wise leue it, good reder, vnreformed. ¶ Nor neuer purpose while I liue, whersoeuer I may perceiue, either mine aduersary to saye well, or my selfe to haue saide otherwyse, to let for vs both indifferently to declare and saye the truth.

And surely if they wold vse yeself same honeste plaine truthe towarde me, you shold sone see, good reders, all our contēcions ended. For than shold you se, that like as I haue not letted after mine apologye to declare y^t Tindale hadde somewhat amended and asswaged in one point his formar euill assercions concerning satisfaccion, so shoulde he confesse the trouth that I had truely touched him, and that hymselfe had sore erred, as well in the remenāt therof, as in all his other heresies. And than also, like as I let not here, for the pacifiers part, to declare myself ouersene with hast in this one poīt, so should he not

let well and honestly to say the trouth on the tother side, and cōfesse himself very far ouersene wt lōg leisure, in al the remenant besyde. I saye not in all that he saith, but in all that is debated betwene vs.

I wote wel ye best horse wer he which wer so sure of fote, that runne he neuer so fast wold neuer in his life neither fall nor stūble. But sithe we can fynde none so sure, that horse is not much to be misliked, which that with courage and prycking forth in hast, happing for all hys fowre fete sometime to catch a fall, getteth vp again lightly by himself wtoute touch of spurre or any check of ye bridle. No nor yet that horse to be caste awaye neither, that getteth vp agayne apace wt the checke of them bothe. Nowe lyke as with the best kinde can I not compare, so of the third sorte at the least wise will I neuer fayle to be, that is to wyt, ryse and reforme my selfe, whan any manne shewe me my faulte. And as nere as I can wyll I serche them, and as sone as I spye them, before anye man controlle thē, aryse, and as I now do, mine own selfe reforme thē. Which kynd is, you wotte, well nexte vnto the best. But yet on the tother side, of all myne aduersaries coulde I neuer hitherto fynde any one, but whan he catcheth once a fall, as ech of them hath caught full manye, there lyeth he still tumblyng and toltryng in myre, and neyther spurre nor brydle cā one ynche preuayle, but as though they were not fallen in a puddle of dirte, but rubbed and layde in litter vnder the manger at theyr ease, they whyne and they byte, and they kick and they spurne at him that would help them vp. And yt is yet a fourth kynde, the woorst, ye wotte well, that canne be.

This extract is a fair average specimen of the modesty, candour, charity, refinement, and logic of Sir Thomas More in his controversial writings. His Treatise on the Passion, written during his last imprisonment, and interrupted by his deprivation of pen, ink, and paper, by order of the king, is in better temper, but little superior in style or ability to this fragment. His fame as an English writer must rest on the Life of Richard III., if, indeed, that is his work, and his claim to our sympathy as a man finds a better support in his family letters and his last hours, than in his voluminous theological discussions, or in his administration of his spiritual jurisdiction.

More's most conspicuous antagonist was Tyndale, whose translation of the New Testament, first published in 1526, has exerted a more marked influence upon English philology than

any other native work between the ages of Chaucer and of Shakespeare. I have, in the twenty-eighth lecture of my first series, and elsewhere in the same volume*, so fully discussed the merits and importance of this translation that I need not again enter upon it; but I append to this lecture the eighth chapter of Matthew from Tyndale's translation, edition of 1526, reprinted at Andover, from Bagster, in 1837. For further illustration, I subjoin the singular translation of the same chapter, executed by Sir John Cheke about the year 1550.

When we consider the extensive circulation which the works of Wycliffe and other reformers had for a long period enjoyed, and the progress which the dialect of theology had made, it seems remarkable that, at the commencement of the reformatory movement, there should have been found in England so few men capable of maintaining its principles by argument. But the brutal and malignant despotism of Henry VIII. had so effectually put down the spirit of free inquiry in the earlier years of his reign, that when he himself thought it convenient to throw off allegiance to the see of Rome, there was a want of theological talent and learning in his dominions, which had to be supplied from Continental sources. Hence, very many of the instructors of the English people in the principles of the Reformation were of German, Dutch, or Swiss birth, and the English reformers themselves had often resorted to the Continent for study, or for security from persecution. These foreign teachers generally wrote in Latin, and when their writings were translated, paraphrased, or epitomized for the edification of the laity, they brought with them many new words and idioms—a special phraseology, in fact, suited to the discussion of the doctrines they advanced. At that period of universal religious excitement, the study of theology was, to the man of liberal culture, just what the study of political history and public economy is in our day—a necessary complement to the

* See First Series, pp. 113, 171, 383, 625, 627, and Illustrations II. and III. at the end of this lecture.

special learning required for the exercise of his particular profession, or the performance of his general duties as a member of the body politic. Every man of education, every man who read at all in fact, read theological books, and consequently there was, almost at once, a very considerable accession of Latin words to the vocabulary of English.

The study of classical literature was in England rather a consequence, than an efficient cause, of the Reformation. In Germany, France, and Italy, the case had been otherwise. There, the revival of Greek, and especially of Latin secular philology, preceded and prepared the way for the diffusion of works of religious controversy. The literature of Greece enlightened and liberalized the minds of scholars, and the speech of Rome furnished a vehicle, a universal language, by means of which the works of a free inquirer in one country could be circulated in another, without the delay of translation, or the expense of getting up new editions; while, in England, the first step necessarily was to make the treatise intelligible by an English version.

There is no doubt that the desire of reading in their native form new works, which at that time were exciting a profound interest throughout the civilized world, and of consulting the original texts of the sacred writings, and of the fathers of the church, was one of the principal incentives to the study of classical lore, which had hitherto made little progress in England.* The versions of classic authors, printed by Caxton, were made at second hand from the French, with the exception of Cicero's De Amicitia, which was translated from the original by Tiptoft, Earl of Worcester.

Even the universities afforded but slender facilities for the acquisition of classical Latin and Greek, and the Greek pro-

* Sir Thomas More quotes Tyndale as making this extraordinary assertion: 'Remember ye not howe in our owne time, of al that taught grammar in England not one understode ye latine tong?' More denies that the fact is apposite as an illustration for the purpose for which Tyndale had used it, but so far from disputing its truth, he impliedly admits it. Workes, p. 723 n.

fessorship at Cambridge was not founded until about 1540. Hence the few Englishmen who desired to pursue such studies were obliged to repair to the Continental schools for that purpose. It is true that the transfer of instruction from the monasteries to public schools—a step absolutely indispensable to the progress of classic philology—had begun with the century. Lilly, the famous grammarian, who had learned Greek in the Levant, became the first master of St. Paul's School in 1500; and about twenty-two grammar schools were established within as many years after that date. Cardinal Wolsey exerted his powerful influence in support of a more liberal system of education than had been pursued at the conventual seminaries; but his plans of improvement met most violent opposition from the jealousy of the monastic orders, and from their reluctance to surrender the monopoly of education, which had proved so lucrative a source of income, and at the same time so efficient a means of securing political influence. Besides this, the new schools had to contend with the superstitious prejudices of the clergy, most of whom both thought all heathen literature profane and blasphemous, and feared danger from the creeping in of heresies in consequence of the general diffusion of an acquaintance with the New Testament in the Greek text.

For these reasons, classical literature long remained at a low ebb, and it can hardly be said to have exerted an appreciable influence upon the English language much before the middle of the reign of Henry VIII.

The first immediate result of this study was naturally an increased attention to the grammar of the vernacular, and a disposition to assimilate its theory to that of the ancient languages. Hitherto, neither English, nor even French, is known to have possessed dictionaries, grammars, or written rules or philological helps of any sort.* There existed, indeed, several

* English was ordered to be taught in the common schools in the fourteenth century, and in a passage already referred to, Tyndale and Sir Thomas More speak of grammar-schools, the masters of which were ignorant of Latin. Here, then, is

Anglo-Latin glossaries and vocabularies, but these seem to have been intended to facilitate the study of conventual Latin rather than to serve to explain the meaning of English words.* So far as yet appears, the first grammatical treatise in the English language — the earliest evidence that any Englishman had ever thought of subjecting any modern tongue to the discipline of philological principle and precept — is Palsgrave's remarkable French grammar, composed for the use of the Princess Mary, and printed in 1530. This presents a very full and complete view of French accidence, syntax, and idiomatic structure, with a copious vocabulary. As it is written in English and constantly illustrates French grammar by comparison with English, it is of high value as a source of information upon the authorized forms

a period of a century and a half, during which English was scholastically taught. How was this practicable without accidences or grammatical manuals of some kind? Of all literary products, children's school-books are the most perishable. Spelling-books fifty years old are as rare as Caxtons, and the present existence of a real *horn*-book is as questionable as that of the unicorn. An English grammar, of Chaucer's time, or Pecock's, or even of Tyndale's boyhood, would be a *trouvaille*, that would well repay a half-year's search among mouldering manuscripts.

* The author of the compilation called Promptorius or Promptorium Parvulorum, Way's very valuable edition of which is one of the most important contributions ever made to English historical etymology, expressly states that he prepared the work for the use of young ecclesiastics, 'qui nunc ad usum clericalis loquele velut cervi ad fontes aquarum desiderant sed Latina vocabula ignorantes,' etc.

It is an observation of some interest with respect to the permanence of local dialects, which many modern linguists so strongly insist upon, that the author declares: 'comitatus tamen Northfolchie modum loquendi solum sum secutus, quem solum ab infancia didici, et solotenus plenius perfectiusque cognovi,' and again, at the close of the preface: 'Explicit preambulum in libellum predictum, secundum vulgarem modum loquendi orientalium Anglorum.' This preface is dated in 1440. Forby's vocabulary of East-Anglia gives us the peculiarities of the colloquial dialect of the same counties in 1830. There are, it is true, some coincidences between the two word-lists, but he must be a philologer of easy faith, who can find in the comparison of them satisfactory evidence that the special dialect of the Orientales Angli of 1440 was identical with that of the East-Anglians of 1830. It must however be admitted, for the comfort of believers in the immutability of vulgar speech, that the Chronicle of Capgrave, a Norfolk man who flourished in the first half of the fifteenth century, presents many more points of resemblance with the modern dialect of that county than are to be found in the Promptorium.

of our own language at that period; and, though intended solely for instruction in a foreign tongue, the study of it could not have failed to throw much light on the general principles of English syntax, and thus to contribute, in an important degree, to the improvement of English philology. Palsgrave's views of the logical and syntactical structure of language were taken from one of the Greek grammars then in vogue. He accordingly applied the doctrines of ancient grammar to his exposition of the theory of the French, and indirectly of the English, and his work did much to introduce the grammatical nomenclature of the Latin into English, and to establish philological opinions more in harmony with the structure of ancient inflected, than of modern indeclinable, languages.*

The inducements which the writings of German and Swiss and Dutch Reformers suggested for acquiring a knowledge of Hebrew and Greek and classical Latin, gave a great impulse to the study of the humanities, as they were called. Ancient authors were made comparatively familiar, by translations whose vocabulary and style were marked by Latinisms; and the diction of English writers, who were able to read those authors in the original, was, consciously or unconsciously, enriched by borrowed phrases and single terms, needed to express the new ideas and new sentiments that were pouring in from so many sources. Thus the profane literature of Greece and Rome contributed, both directly and indirectly, to enlarge the stock of English

* The most remarkable peculiarity of Palsgrave's English is, that where an adjective belonging to the technical nomenclature of grammar follows its noun, he commonly makes its plural in *s*; thus: verbes actyve*s* parsonalle*s*, verbes deponente*s* or comen*s*, pronounes interrogative*s*, &c. &c. We have still current in English a few examples of adjectives inflected for the plural, but they are cases where the noun has been so long dropped from the phrase, that it has been forgotten. Thus, in 'Know all men by these present*s*,' *presents* is an adjective, agreeing with *letters* understood; per has *litteras presentes*. *Premises*, in deeds of conveyance, is also an adjective, its noun being understood.

Palsgrave was, so far as I know, the first writer who used a *figured* pronunciation, which he employs both to convey the sounds of the letters, and to show how the *liaisons* are made. Thus he writes:

Regnans par droit, heureux et glorieux,
Renávnpardroatevrévzegloriévz.

words, and the vocabulary grew with constantly increasing rapidity.

It is fortunate that Tyndale's translation of the New Testament, first published in 1526, was executed before the traditional sacred dialect, handed down from the time of Wycliffe, was yet much affected by this flood of Latinisms, which, a few years later, produced so marked a change in the English language. The Rhemish version shows us something of what we should have had in the place of our present translation, had Tyndale's work been postponed a short time longer. An English translator of the next generation would not have thought of studying Wycliffe, but would have taken the current English of his time as the standard of style, and given us a text perhaps a little more accurate than that of Tyndale, but altogether inferior in force, beauty, and purity of expression.

But let us turn for a moment to the poetic literature of the reign of Henry VIII. It is little to the credit of modern taste and refinement, that so gross and repulsive an author as Skelton should be better known to students of old English literature, than the graceful and elegant Surrey and Wyatt. Puttenham well characterizes Skelton as a 'rude rayling rimer,' and it is not too much to say of him, that while he has all the coarseness of Swift, he does not atone for it by a spark of the genius of Chaucer. Most of Skelton's works appeared in the time of Henry VIII., but he seems to have had a reputation for learning in his earlier youth; for Caxton, in the preface to an edition of the Æneid which he had himself translated from a French version, speaks of Skelton as one 'knowne for suffycyent to expoune and Englysshe every dyffyculte that is therein;' and at a later day, when he was tutor to Prince Henry, afterwards King Henry VIII., he was complimented by Erasmus as 'Britannicarum literarum decus et lumen.' It is more to his classical scholarship than to his poetical works that he owed his original literary reputation, and though his translations of some ancient authors, which are still preserved in manuscript, would be a valuable contribution to English philology, the loss of his

rhymes would be but a trifling injury to English literature. His learning certainly did little for the improvement of his English style, and we may say of his diction in general, that all that is not vulgar is pedantic.

Stephen Hawes, who flourished in the reigns of Henry VII. and Henry VIII., was the author of the Passetyme of Pleasure and of several other poems, all popular in his time and all now deservedly forgotten. Warton thinks that he 'added new graces to Lydgate's manner,' but these graces I am unable to discover, and I agree with Wright in the opinion, that in all respects his works are 'monuments of the bad taste of a bad age.' They have, however, a certain philological interest, both on account of their versification, which, though far from mellifluous, presents some improvements, and especially as showing the rapidity with which French and Latin words were now flowing into the language, and as illustrating that connection between rhymed verse and a Romance vocabulary, of which I have so often spoken. The fifth chapter of his dull allegory, the Passetyme of Pleasure, is entitled, 'How Science sent him fyrst to Gramer, where he was received by Dame Congruyte,' and is as follows:—

1.

The lady Gramer in all humbly wyse,
Dyd me receyve into her goodly scoole;
To whose doctrine I dyd me advertise
For to attayne, in her artyke poole,
Her gyfted dewe, for to oppresse my doole;
To whom I sayde that I wold gladly lerne
Her noble connynge, so that I myght descerne

2.

What that it is, and why that it was made?
To whych she answered than, in speciall,
By cause that connynge shoulde not pale ne fade,
Of every scyence it is originall,
Whych doth us tech ever in generall
In all good ordre to speke directly,
And for to wryte by true ortografy.

3.

Somtyme in Egypt reygned a noble kyng,
Iclyped Evander, whych dyd well abounde
In many vertues, especially in lernyng;
Whych had a doughter, that by her study found
To wryte true Latyn the fyrst parfyt ground.
Whose goodly name, as her story sayes,
Was called Carmentis in her livyng dayes.

4.

Thus in the tyme of olde antiquytie,
The noble phylosophers, wyth theyr whole delyghte,
For the comon prouffyte of all humanite,
Of the seven sciences for to knowe the ryght,
They studied many a long wynters nyght,
Eche after other theyr partes to expresse,
Thys was theyr guyse to eschewe ydelnesse.

5.

The pomped carkes wyth foode dilicious
They dyd not feed, but to theyr sustinaunce;
They folowed not theyre fleshe so vycious,
But ruled it by prudent governaunce;
They were content alway wyth suffisaunce,
They coveyted not no worldly treasure,
For they knewe that it myght not endure.

6.

But nowe a dayes the contrary is used:
To wynne the mony theyr studyes be all set.
The commen profyt is often refused,
For well is he that may the money get
From his neyghbour wythout any let.
They thynke nothynge they shall from it pas,
Whan all that is shall be tourned to was.

7.

The bryttel fleshe, nourisher of vyces,
Under the shadowe of evyll slogardy,
Must need haunte the carnall delices;
Whan that the brayne, by corrupt glotony,
Up so downe is tourned than contrary.
Frayle is the bodye to grete unhappynes,
Whan that the head is full of dronkennes.

8.

So doo they now; for they nothyng prepence
Howe cruell deth doth them sore ensue.
They are so blynded in worldly necligence,
That to theyr merite they wyll nothyng renewe
The seven scyences, theyr slouth to eschewe;
To an others profyt they take now no keepe,
But to theyr owne, for to eate, drynke, and sleepe.

9.

And all thys dame Gramer told me every dele,
To whom I herkened wyth all my diligence;
And after thys she taught me ryght well
Fyrst my Donet and then my accidence.
I set my mynde wyth percying influence
To lerne her scyence, the fyrst famous arte,
Eschewyng ydlenes and layeng all aparte.

10.

Madame, quod I, for as much as there be
Eight partes of speche, I would knowe ryght fayne,
What a noune substantive is in hys degre,
And wherefore it is so called certayne?
To whom she answered ryght gentely agayne,
Sayeng alway that a noune substantyve
Might stand wythout helpe of an adjectyve.

11.

The Latyn worde whyche that is referred
Unto a thynge whych is substancyall,
For a noune substantyve is wel averred,
And wyth a gender is declynall;
So all the eyght partes in generall
Are Laten wordes, annexed properly
To every speche, for to speke formally.

12.

And gramer is the fyrst foundement
Of every science to have construccyon:
Who knewe gramer wythout impediment
Shoulde perfytely have intelleccion
Of a lytterall cense and moralyzacion.
To construe every thynge ententifly.
The worde is gramer wel and ordinatly.

13.

By worde the world was made orygynally,
The hye Kynge sayde, it was made incontinent;
He dyd commaunde, al was made shortly.
To the world the worde is sentencious judgemente.
I marked well dame Gramers sentement,
And of her than I dyd take my lycence,
Goynge to Logyke wyth all my dylygence.

In these thirteen stanzas are ninety-one lines, of which sixty-six end in rhyming words of Latin or French origin, and in stanzas fifth, eleventh, and twelfth, not a single rhyme is of Anglo-Saxon derivation.

The poems of Surrey and of Wyatt, who flourished in the latter part of the reign of Henry VIII., are in a very different strain, both of thought and of language. They are of importance in the history of English, from the great advance they show upon the diction of other versifiers of the period; and in the history of literature, as proving that Italian poetry was now beginning to assume somewhat the same influence upon English verse which French had exercised a hundred and fifty years before. There was, however, this difference. The French poets not only banished the native rhythms and dictated the forms of English poetry, but they contributed very essentially to the creation of a new poetic diction, by introducing new words and grammatical idioms, while the Italian poets, though supplying models of poetic composition and suggesting new metres and metrical combinations, added little or nothing to the vocabulary, and did not at all influence the syntax of English.

Surrey—in imitation of the Italian poets who were striving to discard rhyme, as a barbarous corruption of the dignity of verse, and to restore the classic metres, or at least a system of versification founded exclusively on prosodical accent—translated two books of Virgil's Æneid, in blank verse; and this is said to be the first specimen of unrhymed poetry in the English

tongue. This Warton calls a 'noble attempt to break the bondage of rhyme,' and Roger Ascham thinks that in the experiment Surrey was seeking 'the fayrest and ryghtest way.' But the versification of the translation is rugged and uneven, and, upon the whole, greatly inferior, in smoothness of flow and skill in melodious adaptation of words, to Surrey's own rhymed poems. A writer long accustomed to compose in rhyme, but who at last sets himself free from the restraints of consonance, is apt to make a bad use of his new found-liberty, and to convert it into too great prosodical license. This was the case with Surrey, whose blank verse is very often quite undistinguishable from common prose.

The dialect of Surrey, and of Wyatt whose works very closely resemble the poems of Surrey, is much more modern than that of any preceding writer, and it is noticeable that we find in them a less frequent use of forms now obsolete than in even the prose authors of the same period. This is a singular fact, for in all literatures the diction of poetry inclines to archaism of expression; and the departure of Surrey and Wyatt from the usual rule is perhaps to be explained by the circumstance that they had no English precedents in the vein of poetry which they chose to pursue, and, consequently, no native models of a poetic diction consecrated to the utterance of the sentiments they wished to express. They therefore adopted the colloquial dialect of their time, which had discarded many inflections and idioms still habitually retained in written literature whether prose or verse; whereas, if they had employed poetic forms examples of which already existed in English, they could hardly have failed to follow their diction also.

The poems of these authors have exercised a more important influence on the poetical dialect of the English language than has been generally supposed; for their popularity—which was partly due to their adoption of a popular dialect—and their great merit, not only made them authoritative standards and models, but tended in a considerable degree to discourage the

study of older authors, who now very soon began to be considered as rude and barbarous. Although, therefore, Surrey and Wyatt did much to polish and refine the language of their art, yet they on the other hand deprived it of something of its force and energy, by lessening the authority, and consequently occasioning the neglect, of the great master whom Spenser, half a century later, was wise enough to hold to be at once the fountain and the reservoir of the English tongue.

The sermons of Bishop Latimer, which belong to this period, are of much interest, because they are written in a very familiar style, and give us, perhaps, a better idea of the living speech of educated men at that time than any other existing literary monument. The sermons of Latimer, and other works of similar linguistic character, serve well to show a truth which has but lately begun to be recognized in philology: that though foreign-born words and new logical combinations of familiar words are generally introduced by written literature, yet syntactical and inflectional changes originate with the people, and are current in every-day speech some time before they are recognized as admissible in formal composition. Latimer's writings, reduced to the modern orthography, present scarcely more difficulty to a reader of our own time than a newspaper of this century; but there are few prose or poetical works of that day belonging to the higher walks of literature, which are not much more archaic in their structure and vocabulary than these plain-spoken homilies. The following extracts are from the rare volume of sermons, seven in number, preached by Latimer before King Henry VIII. and his Court, in March and April, 1549:—

FROM SERMON II.

I can not go to my boke for pore folkes come vnto me, desirynge me that I wyll speake y^t theyr matters maye be heard. I trouble my Lord of Canterburye, & beynge at hys house nowe and then I walke in the garden lokyng in my boke, as I canne do but little good at it. But some thynge I muste nedes do to satisfye thys place.

I am no soner in the garden and haue red a whyle, but by and by commeth there some or other knocking at the gate.

Anone cometh my man and sayth: Syr, there is one at the gate woulde speake wyth you. When I come there, then is it some or other that desireth me that I wyll speake that hys matter might be heard, & that he hath layne thys longe at great costes and charges, and can not once haue hys matter come to the hearing, but amōg all other, one especially moued me at thys time to speake.

Thys it is syr: A gentylwoman came to me and tolde me, that a greate man kepeth certaine landes of hyrs from hyr and wilbe hyr tenaunte in the spite of hyr tethe. And that in a whole twelue moneth she coulde not gette but one daye for the hearynge of hyr matter, and the same daye when the matter shoulde be hearde, the greate manne broughte on hys syde a greate syghte of Lawyers for hys counsayle, the gentilwoman had but one mā of lawe: and the great man shakes him so, so that he cā [not] tell what to do, so that when the matter came to the poynte, the Judge was a meane to the gentylwoman that she wold let the great mā haue a quietnes in hyr Lande. I beseche your grace that ye wyll loke to these matters.

FROM SERMON III.

Ther is a certen mā that shortely after my fyrst sermon, beyng asked if he had byn at ye sermon that day, answerd, yea: I praye you sayd he how lyked you him? marye, sayd he, euē as I lyked hym alwayes, a sedicious felow. Oh Lord he pinched me there in dede, nay he had rather a ful byt at me. Yet I comfort myselfe with that, y^t Christ hī selfe was noted to be a sturrer vp of the people agaīst the Emperoure, and was contented to be called sedyciouse.

It becommeth me to take it in good worthe, I am not better then he was. In the kynges daies y^t dead is, a meanye of vs were called together before him to saye our myndes in certaine matters. In the ende one kneleth me downe, & accuseth me of sedycion, that I had preched sedyciouse doctryne. A heuy salutation, and a hard poīt of such a mans doynge, as if I should name hym, ye woulde not thynke it. The kynge turned to me and saied: What saie you to that, syr? Then I kneled downe, and turned me first to myne accuser, and required hym:

Syr, what fourme of preachīge would you appoynt me to preache before a kynge?

Woulde you haue me for to preache nothynge as concerninge a Kynge in the Kynges sermō. Haue you any commissyon to apoynt me what I shal preache? Besydes thys I asked hym dyuers othere questyons, and

he would make no answer to none of them all. He had nothynge to saye. Then I turned me to the kynge, and submitted my selfe to hys grace and sayd: I neuer thoughte my selfe worthy, nor I neuer sued to be a preacher before youre grace, but I was called to it, and woulde be wylling yf you mislyke me, to geue place to my betters. For I graūt ther be a gret meany more worthie of the rome then I am. And if be so youre graces pleasure to allowe theym for preachers, I coulde be content to bere theyr bokes after them. But if youre grace allowe me for a preacher, I would desyer your grace to geue me leue to dischardge my cōciēce. Geue me leue to frame my doctrine accordenge to mine audyēce. I had byn a veri dolte to haue preached so at the borders of your realme as I prech before your grace.

FROM THE SAME.

Wo worthe these giftes, they subuert iustyce euerye where. *Sequuntur retributiones.* Some what was geuē to thē before, & they must nedes gyue somewhat again, for gyffegafe was a good felowe, this gyffegaffe led thē clen frō iustice. They folow giftes. A good felowe on a time had an other of hys frends to a breake faste, and sayed: Yf you wyll come you shall be welcome, but I tell you afore hande, you shall haue but sclender fare, one dish and that is all. What is that, saide he. A puddyne, and nothynge els. Mary, sayde he, you cā not please me better, of all mettes, that is for myne owne toth. You may draw me round about the towne with a puddyng.

These brybinge magistrates and iudges folow gyftes faster thē the fellowe would followe the puddynge.

I am content to beare the title of sedition wt Esai. Thankes be to God, I am not alone, I am in no singularitie. Thys same man that layed sedition thus to my charge was asked an other tyme, whether he were at the sermon at Paules crosse; he answered yt he was there, and beynge asked what newes there. Marye quod he, wonderfull newes, wee were ther cleane absolued, my mule and all hadde full absolution. Ye may se by thys, that he was such a one that rode on a mule, and that he was a gentylmā.

In dede hys mule was wyser then he, for I dare say, the mule neuer sclaundered the preacher. Oh what an vnhappy chaunce had thys Mule to carrye such an Asse vppon hys backe! I was there at the sermon my selfe. In the end of his sermon he gaue a generall absolution, and as farre as I remember, these, or such other lyke were hys wordes, but at the least I am sure, thys was hys meanynge. As manye as do knowledge your selfes to be synners, and confesse the same and standes not in defēce of it, and hertely abhorreth it,

and wyl beleve in ye death of Christ, and be conformable therunto, *Ego absoluo vos*, quod he. Now, saith thys gētylman, hys mule was absolued. The preacher absolued but such as were sory and dyd repente. Bilyke then she dyd repente hyr stumblynge, hys Asse was wyser then he a greate deale. I speake not of worldely wysedome, for therin he is to wyse, yea, so wyse, that wyse men maruayle howe he came trulye by the tenth part of that he hathe. But in wisdome which consisteth *in rebus Dei*, *in rebus Salutis*, in godlye matters, & pertayning to our saluacyō, in this wisedome he is as blynde as a bittel. Thei be *Tanquam equus et mulus in quibus non est intellectus*; Lyke horses and mules that haue no understandynge.

If it were true that the mule repented hyr of hyr stumblyng I thynke shee was better absolued then he. I pray God stop his mouthe, or els to open it to speake better, and more to hys glory. An other man quickned with a word I spoke (as he saied opprobriously agaynste the nobility that theyr childrē dyd not set forthe Gods worde, but were vnpreachynge prelates) was offended wyth me.

FROM SERMON VI.

The arte of shutynge hath ben in tymes past much estemed in this realme, it is a gyft of God that he hath geuen vs to excell all other nacions wythall. It hath bene Goddes instrumente, whereby he hath gyuē vs manye victories agaynste oure enemyes. But nowe we haue taken vp horynge in tounes, in steede of shutyng in the fyeldes. A wonderous thynge, that so excellente a gift of God shoulde be so lytle estemed. I desyer you my Lordes, even as ye loue the honoure, and glory of God, and entende to remove his indignacion, let ther be sente fourth some proclimacion, some sharpe proclimacion, to the iustices of peace, for they do not their dutye. Justices now be no iustices, ther be manye good actes made for thys matter already. Charge them vpō theyr allegiaunce y^t this singular benefit of God maye be practised, and that it be not turned into bollyng, glossyng, and whoryng wythin the townes, for they be negligente in executyng these lawes of shutyng.

In my tyme my poore father was as diligent to teach me to shote as to learne anye other thynge, and so I thynke other menne dyd theyr children. He taught me how to drawe, how to laye my bodye in my bowe, and not to drawe wyth strēgth of armes, as other nacions do, but with strength of the bodye. I had my bowes boughte me accordyng to my age & strēgth; as I encreased in them, so my bowes were made bigger and bigger, for men shal neuer shot well, excepte they be broughte vp in it. It is a goodly art, a holsome kynde of

exercise, much commended in phisike. Marsilius Ficinus, in hys boke *de triplici vita* (it is a greate while sins I red hym nowe), but I remēbre he commendeth this kinde of exercise, and sayth that it wrestleth agaynste manye kyndes of diseases. In the reuerēce of God, let it be continued.

Sir John Cheke, Professor of Greek in the University of Cambridge, is perhaps the first Englishman in whose prose style the influence of a familiarity with classical literature is fully and clearly manifested. I mean the legitimate and proper influence, which is, not the crowding of our diction with Latin words and idioms, not an affluence of quotation or of reminiscence of ancient history and fable, but grammatical accuracy in syntax and inflection, strict attention to the proper use of words singly considered, and idiomatic purity in the construction of phrases and the arrangement of periods. In vocabulary, Cheke was a purist by principle; for in his almost only known original composition, the Hurt of Sedition, he employs none but words which had been for centuries familiar to every intelligent Englishman. In his specimen of a translation of the New Testament, of which only a few chapters are extant — if, indeed, more ever existed — he carries his purism still farther, and introduces many Anglo-Saxon compounds, of his own coinage, in place of the technical words belonging to Christian doctrine which older translators had transferred, without change, from the Greek and Latin texts to their own versions.*

Cheke was no advocate of popular rights, but the following paragraphs from his Hurt of Sedition may even now be read with profit by those whom they concern. I take them from

* See Cheke's translation of the eighth chapter of Matthew's gospel, in Longer Notes and Illustrations, III., at the end of this lecture.

Among the new words fabricated by Cheke for his translation are: *biwordes*, parables, examples; *crossed*, crucified; *debitee* (deputy) *of ye fourth part*, tetrarch; *forsaiers* and *forschewers*, prophets; *frosent*, sent out, and *frosender*, he who sends out; *freschman*, proselyte; *gainbirth*, regeneration; *groundwrought*, founded; *hunderder*, centurion; *moond* (mooned), lunatic; *onwriting*, superscription; *outpeopling*, carrying into captivity; *outborn*, alien; *outcalled*, elect; *soulisch* (animal), the natural man; *trutorn* (true turn), true translation.

Holinshed, reprint of 1808, vol. iii. pp. 987, 988, 992, 1005, 1007.

Among so manie and notable benefits, wherewith God hath alreadie and plentifullie indued vs, there is nothing more beneficiall, than that we haue by his grace kept vs quiet from rebellion at this time. For we see such miseries hang ouer the whole state of the common-wealth, through the great misorder of your sedition, that it maketh vs much to reioise, that we haue béene neither partners of your doings, nor conspirers of your counsels. For euen as the Lacedemonians for the auoiding of drunkennesse did cause their sons to behold their seruants when they were drunke, that by beholding their beastlinesse, they might auoid the like vice: euen so hath God like a mercifull father staied vs from your wickednesse, that by beholding the filth of your fault, we might iustlie for offense abhorre you like rebels, whome else by nature we loue like Englishmen. And so for our selues, we haue great cause to thanke God, by whose religion and holie word dailie taught vs, we learne not onelie to feare him trulie, but also to obeie our king faithfullie, and to serue in our owne vocation like subiects honestlie. And as for you, we haue suerlie iust cause to lament you as brethren, and yet iuster cause to rise against you as enimies, and most iust to ouerthrow you as rebels.

For what hurt could be doone either to vs priuatlie, or to the whole common-wealth generallie, that is now with mischiefe so brought in by you, that euen as we sée now the flame of your rage, so shall we necessarilie be consumed hereafter with the miserie of the same. Wherefore consider your selues with some light of vnderstanding, and marke this gréeuous and horrible fault, which ye haue thus vilelie committed, howe heinous it must néeds appeare to you, if ye will reasonablie consider that which for my duties sake, and my whole countries cause, I will at this present declare vnto you. Ye which be bound by Gods word not to obeie for feare like men-pleasers, but for conscience sake like cristians, haue contrarie to Gods holie will, whose offense is euerlasting death, and contrarie to the godlie order of quietnesse, set out to vs in the kings maiesties lawes, the breach whereof is not vnknowne to you, taken in hand vncalled of God, vnsent by men, vnfit by reason, to cast awaie your bounden duties of obedience, and to put on you against the magistrats, Gods office committed to the magistrats, for the reformation of your pretensed iniuries. In the which dooing ye haue first faulted grieuouslie against God, next offended vnnaturallie our souereigne lord, thirdlie troubled miserablie the whole common-wealth,

vndoone cruellie manie an honest man, and brought in an vtter miserie both to vs the kings subiects, and to your selues being false rebels. And yet ye pretend that partlie for Gods cause, and partlie for the common-wealths sake, ye doo arise, when as your selues cannot denie; but ye that seeke in word Gods cause, doo breake indéed Gods commandements; and ye that séeke the common-wealth, haue destroied the common-wealth: and so ye marre that ye would make, and brake that ye would amend, because ye neither seeke anie thing rightlie, nor would amend anie thing orderlie.

* * * *

But what talke I of disobedience so quietlie? Haue not such mad rages run in your heads, that forsaking and bursting the quietnesse of the common peace, ye haue heinouslie and traitorouslie incamped your selues in field, and there like a bile in a bodie, naie like a sinke in a towne, haue gathered togither all the nastie vagabonds and idle loiterers to beare armour, &c. &c.

* * * *

Desperate sicknesse in physicke must haue desperate remedies, for meane medicines will neuer helpe great griefes. So if ye cast your selues into such sharpe diseases, ye must néeds looke for sharpe medicines againe at your physicians hands. And worthie ye be to suffer the extremitie in a commonwealth, which seeke to doo the extremitie, and by reason must receive the like ye offer, and so be contented to bide the end willinglie which set on the beginning willfullie.

* * * *

Thus the whole countrie lacking the good opinion of other nations, is cast into great shame by your vnrulinesse, and the proceedings of the countrie, be they neuer so godlie, shall be ill spoken of, as vnfit to be brought into vse; and good things hereby that deserue praise, shall bide the rebuke of them that list to speake ill, and ill things vntouched shall be boldlier mainteined.

* * * *

And with what dutie or vertue in ye, can ye quench out of memorie this foule enterprise, or gather a good report againe to this realme, who haue so vilelie with reproch slandered the same, and diuerslie discredited it among others, and abated the good opinion which was had of the iust gouernement and ruled order vsed heretofore in this noble realme, which is now most grieuous, bicause it is now most without cause.

If this outward opinion (without further inconuenience) were all, yet it might well be borne, and would with ease decaie as it grewe: but it hath not onlie hurt vs with voice, but indangered vs in déed, and cast

vs a great deale behind the hand, where else we might haue had a iollie foredeale. For that opportunitie of time which seldome chanceth, and is alwaies to bée taken, hath béene by your froward meanes lost this yeare, and so vainlie spent at home for bringing downe of you, which should else profitablie haue béene otherwise bestowed, that it hath béene almost as great a losse to vs abrode, to lacke that we might haue obteined, as it was combrance at home to go about the ouerthrow of you, whose sedition is to be abhorred. And we might both conuenientlie haue inuaded some, if they would not reasonablie haue growne to some kind of friendship, and also defended others which would beside promise for times sake vniustlie set upon vs, and easilie haue made this stormie time a faire yeare vnto vs, if our men had beene so happie at home, as our likelihood abrode was fortunat.

The Reformation, at first, gave a stimulus to the study of Latin as the universal speech of science and of philosophical and religious discussion, and of Greek as the language in which the New Testament—if not originally written in that tongue—had at least come down from the primitive ages of Christianity. But the attention of the learned was soon drawn from the secular literature of Greece and Rome and absorbed in theological and scholastic casuistry; and finally a superstitious distrust of the tendency of profane scholarship succeeded to the admiration with which the classical authors had been so recently regarded. The dissolution of the monasteries under Henry VIII. broke up some schools, and numbers of the Greek and Latin manuscripts preserved in the conventual libraries were destroyed—sometimes in the blind fury of a popular outbreak, and sometimes by the monks themselves, who preferred burning their books to allowing them to pass into the hands of the heretics. Hence the cause of classical learning sustained a check in England, and the study can hardly be said to have fairly revived until the reign of Elizabeth, who was herself a good Greek and Latin scholar.

This short interruption, so far from proving injurious to the improvement of the English language, was rather a benefit to it; for it put a temporary stop to the influx of Latin words,

which were threatening to overwhelm the Anglo-Saxon vocabulary, and before the study of Greek and Latin came again into vogue, English had gathered strength enough and received sufficient polish and culture to be able to sustain itself as a literary dialect against the encroachments of ancient or foreign philologies.

About the close of the first third of this century, John Heywood introduced a new species, if not a new genus of literature — the comedy. The comedy is distinguished from the Mysteries, Moralities, Interludes, and other histrionic exhibitions which had preceded it, by devoting itself to the representation of popular manners and of scenes from familiar life. The Mysteries were properly theological, the Moralities ethical, in aim, and professedly in tone. The characters were either taken from sacred history or they were allegorical personifications of virtues and vices. To draw an exact line between them, or between either of them and later forms of theatrical representation, is impossible, because they belong to uncritical ages, when authors themselves had no clear notions of the principles of imaginative literature, or of the boundaries by which truth to nature requires us to divide its different branches ; and what they confounded in practice, it is idle for us to attempt to separate in theory.

These ancient scenic entertainments were often intermixed with buffoonery and burlesque, or with incidents and dialogue of a graver character, sometimes approximating closely to the incidents and sentiments of real life. They therefore prepared the way for the reception and the composition of both comedy and tragedy — for the entire drama, in short — and this branch of English literature is more indebted to these rude essays for its special character than to the influence of the classic stage.

I ought here to notice certain important formal and substantial distinctions between the English drama and that of the Continent in general, the French especially, which latter shows much more strongly the influence of classic models, and of the

traditions belonging to the scenic representations of the middle ages. In form, the English writers have usually disregarded the unities of time and place to which the French so strictly adhere, and in action and tendency, they have a less distinctly avowed, though not less real, moral and didactic character.

The comedies of Molière, for instance, are professedly designed to satirize, each some one prevalent vice or folly; and every play is as conspicuously marked and labelled as the phials of an apothecary's shop; so that the moral patient is always informed beforehand what malady the medicine is intended to cure, and what drug he is about to swallow. The moral of the English comedy is not thus ostentatiously displayed, nor, in the highest examples of that species of composition, is the purpose of the dramatist limited to the exposure and castigation of a single weakness or a single wrong.

And herein, as in all else, the Shakespearian drama is infinitely more true to nature than all other schools. Providence and nature indeed are great moral teachers, but their lessons are neither ticketed nor announced in advance; nor are they single, or observant of the stage proprieties of time or place. A man is not born, and bred, and trained up, and sent out into the world, with a retinue of dramatis personæ, for no other purpose than to show forth, by his example, the excellence of virtue, or, by his punishment or disgrace, the evils of ambition and avarice, the folly of pride or the absurdities of fashion and social conventionalism; for even the Deity does not employ *persons* solely as means to an end. We are all here for a multitude of purposes, individual to ourselves or common to our fellow-men, and none is sent hither only as a model or as a warning. The lessons of the world are incidental, not formal or specific; and that great humanity, from which we are to learn how to solve the problems of social life, is a wise teacher indeed, but no pedant.

The plays of Heywood, to borrow the words of Wharton, 'are destitute of plot, humour, or character'—certainly very essential ingredients in true comedy. Hence, they are of no intrinsic

importance, and their literary interest is only that which attaches to all distinctly characterized first essays in every branch of composition. They are valuable, not as models, but only as the first clearly recognized specimens of their kind, and as marking a period of transition and of a new creation in dramatic art. They have, too, a philological interest and value, but this will be more appropriately considered in connection with the diction of the later English dramatists, who, by a short interval, preceded Shakespeare.

In any general view of English literature, a notice of the ballad poetry is indispensable; but in a course devoted chiefly to the philology of our tongue, this branch of our poetry must occupy a very subordinate place, because the diction of the ballads does not appear truly to represent either the colloquial language of their own periods, or the literary dialect, as exhibited in any other form of prose or poetical composition. It is therefore to be regarded as a special nomenclature rather than as a part of the general language of England. The English ballads are usually of moderate merit, and they seem to have been composed by and for persons of a low grade of culture. There are indeed many very striking exceptions to this latter remark, but in these cases, the dialect rises at once above the level of that of the ordinary ballad poetry, assimilates itself to the diction of other poetical writings, and is hardly distinguishable from them in either vocabulary or inflection.

The singular grammatical forms of many English ballads seem to be mere ignorant corruptions, or unwarrantable licenses of inferior rhymsters, and they can never be cited as authorities in philological discussion. The Scottish ballads are in general superior to the English, and it is highly probable that they derive many of their literary as well as their dialectic peculiarities from the songs of the Scandinavian bards, whose popular ballads are generally of a higher rank than those of the English or of any other of the Northern nations. The Scottish resemble the Scandinavian ballads both in form and in diction, and some

Northern words and forms occur in them, of which it would not be easy to produce examples in other branches of literature.

The individual peculiarities of dialect which mark these performances are too numerous to be noticed in detail, but I may observe in general, that the conjugations of the verbs seem to be almost arbitrarily varied, and the writers often fail to distinguish between the radical and the servile, or so to speak accidental, parts of words.

Besides this, there is, as to most of them, a total uncertainty with respect to their local origin and their date, and therefore we can assign them to no dialectic class, no definite period, in the history of the language. In spite, therefore, of the beauty, the psychological, and even the historical interest of many of these productions, they must be excluded from the rank of influences or of landmarks in our philological annals.*

LONGER NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

I.

SIR THOMAS MORE'S LIFE OF RICHARD III.

As I have observed in my former Series of Lectures, Appendix, p. 388, the coalescent forms *asaued* and *afled* occur in Hardynge's text of More's Life of Richard III., p. 547, reprint of 1812. The passage is probably an addition by Grafton, as it is not found in Rastell's edition. It would seem not likely that so learned a man as More would have employed such incorrect expressions; but, nevertheless, a case of coalescence is found in the edition of Rastell just referred to, and it is possible that it is one of many which the original manuscript contained, and which the editor had resolved into their elements. It is this: 'This deuise all be it that it made the matter to wise men more unlykely, well perceyuyng that the intendours of suche a purpose wolde

* I cannot dismiss the subject of ballads without drawing the attention of my readers to the admirable and very complete collection of English and Scottish ballads, in eight volumes, edited by Professor F. J. Child, of Harvard University. Great care has been exercised in the selection of the most authoritative texts, and they are illustrated with a profusion of folk-lore, which, with the ballads, makes the work a true encyclopædia of popular song.

rather haue hadde theyr harneys on theyr backes than *taue* bounde them uppe in barrelles' &c.—*Workes of Sir Thomas More*, p. 45, E.

On pages 52, 66 and 67 of Rastell's edition, are inserted long passages, which, according to the marginal note, were 'not written by Master More in this history by him writtē in English, but are translated out of this history which he wrote in Laten.' The orthography of these passages is not distinguishable from that of the rest of the work, nor indeed would it be easy to point out any special differences, in syntax or diction, between what is declared to be More's composition, and what is, apparently, Rastell's translation. But between 1513 and 1557 very considerable changes had taken place in the spelling and the phraseological combinations of English, and it is hence fairly to be inferred that the editor, according to the custom of the time, had conformed the orthography and the grammar of More's original manuscript to later usage.

Holinshed incorporated this life into his chronicle, and in the edition of 1586 it is professedly printed 'according to a copie of his [More's] owne hande, printed among his other Works.' This of course refers to Rastell's edition; but the editor modernizes Rastell's text, as Rastell, no doubt, had done with More's original. In my former Series of Lectures, XXVI., p. 584, I have noticed the distinction between *sith* and *since* as having arisen while those between the two affirmative and between the two negative particles were passing away. Sir Thomas More, according to the edition of 1557, generally employs *sith* as an illative, *since* as an adverb or preposition of *time;* but the distinction is so often disregarded, that it is evident it had not become fully established in his time, or in that of his editor. Thus on p. 50, H, in a passage translated by Rastell, *sith*, but, two lines lower, in More's text, *sins*, are illatives; and *sins* is employed in the same way, pp. 64, H, 136, H, and elsewhere. On the other hand, *sith* is a time-word, p. 223, D, 1427, C, and in other passages. The cases of the use of *sins* as an illative on pp. 50 and 64 occur in the Life of Richard III., and in both instances, the Holinshed of 1586, reprinted in 1808, has *sith*. The logical distinction between *since* and *sith*, as respectively expressive of soquence and consequence, had now become clearly recognized, and Holinshed modernized his author accordingly.

In fact, not only is the orthography of Rastell very greatly changed in Holinshed, but rhetoric and grammar are, in numerous instances, accommodated to the taste or critical opinions of the later editor. Thus, in the first paragraph, Rastell has: 'Kyng Edwarde of that name the fourth;' Holinshed: 'King Edward the fourth of that name;' Rastell:

'Edwarde the Prynce, a thirtene yeare of age;' Holinshed: 'Edward the prince, a thirtéene yeares of age.'

More's manuscript being no longer in existence, we cannot presume to say how far Rastell corrected it; but if he did not make very considerable alterations, he must have been, for his time, the most conscientious of editors. I regret that I have not been able to institute a comparison between Rastell and the original editions of More's controversial writings, as this would furnish a means of judging how nearly his text of the Life conforms to the manuscript.

Note.—Since my manuscript was sent to press, I have had an opportunity of comparing the original edition of More's Apology, printed by Rastell in 1533, with the text given by the same publisher in his edition of More's complete English works, printed in 1557. As we might expect in the repetition of a work by the same press, the differences between the two texts are, in general, orthographical merely, such, for example, as the spelling, *eye*, *eyen*, *muche*, *fearde* in the later, for the *yie*, *yien*, *myche*, *ferd*, of the former edition, and I have not observed any instance of a change in grammatical construction, or of the substitution of a different word, in the text of 1557.

With respect to *sith* and *since*, I note that in the Apology *sith* is used as an illative between fifty and sixty times, as a time-word twice, folios 76 and 110, edition of 1533, while *since* (synnys, synne, synnes,) occurs, always as a time-word, on folios 77, 84, 106, 148, 199, 202, 203, 210, 214, 232 and 243.

II.

MATTHEW'S GOSPEL CHAPTER VIII. FROM TYNDALE.

1 When Jesus was come downe from the mountayne, moch people folowed him.

2 And lo, there cam a lepre, and worsheped him saynge, Master, if thou wylt, thou canst make me clene.

3 He putt forthe his hond and touched him saynge: I will, be clene, and immediatly his leprosy was clensed.

4 And Jesus said vnto him. Se thou tell no man, but go and shewe thysilf to the preste and offer the gyfte, that Moses commaunded to be offred, in witnes to them.

5 When Jesus was entred in to Capernaum, there cam vnto him a certayne Centurion, besechyng him

6 And saynge: Master, my servaunt lyeth sicke att home off the palsye, and is grevously payned.

7 And Jesus sayd vnto him. I will come and cure him.
8 The Centurion answered and saide: Syr I am not worthy that thou shuldest com vnder the rofe of my housse, but speake the worde only and my servaunt shalbe healed.
9 For y also my selfe am a man vndre power, and have sowdeeres vndre me, and y saye to one, go, and he goeth: and to anothre, come, and he cometh: and to my servaunt, do this, and he doeth it.
10 When Jesus herde these saynges: he marveyled, and said to them that folowed him: Verely y say vnto you, I have not founde so great fayth: no, not in Israell.
11 I say therfore vnto you, that many shall come from the eest and weest, and shall rest with Abraham, Ysaac and Jacob, in the kyngdom of heven:
12 And the children of the kingdom shalbe cast out in to the vtmoost dercknes, there shalbe wepinge and gnasshing of tethe.
13 Then Jesus said vnto the Centurion, go thy waye, and as thou hast believed so be it vnto the. And his servaunt was healed that same houre.
14 And Jesus went into Peters housse, and saw his wyves mother lyinge sicke of a fevre,
15 And he thouched her hande, and the fevre leeft her; and she arose, and ministred vnto them.
16 When the even was come they brought vnto him many that were possessed with devylles, And he cast out the spirites with a word, and healed all that were sicke,
17 To fulfill that whiche was spoken by Esay the prophet sainge: He toke on him oure infirmytes, and bare oure sicknesses.
18 When Jesus saw moche people about him, he commaunded to go over the water.
19 And there cam a scribe and said vnto him: master, I woll folowe the whythersumever thou goest.
20 And Jesus said vnto him: the foxes have holes, and the byrddes of the aier have nestes, but the sonne of man hath not whereon to leye his heede:
21 Anothre that was one of hys disciples seyd vnto him: master suffre me fyrst to go and burye my father.
22 But Jesus said vnto him: folowe me, and let the deed burie their deed.
23 And he entred in to a shyppe, and his disciples folowed him,
24 And lo there arose a greate storme in the see, in so moche, that the shippe was hyd with waves, and he was aslepe.

25 And his disciples cam vnto him, and awoke him, sayinge: master, save us, we perishe.

26 And he said vnto them: why are ye fearfull, o ye endewed with lytell faithe? Then he arose, and rebuked the wyndes and the see, and there folowed a greate calme.

27 And men marveyled and said: what man is this, that bothe wyndes and see obey him?

28 And when he was come to the other syde, in to the countre off the gergesens, there met him two possessed of devylls, which cam out off the graves, and were out off measure fearce, so that no man myght go by that waye.

29 And lo they cryed out saynge: O Jesu the sonne off God, what have we to do with the? art thou come hyther to torment vs before the tyme [be come]?

30 There was a good waye off from them a greate heerd of swyne fedinge.

31 Then the devyls besought him saynge: if thou cast vs out, suffre vs to go oure waye into the heerd of swyne.

32 And he said vnto them: go youre wayes: Then went they out, and departed into the heerd of swyne. And lo, all the heerd of swyne was caryed with violence hedlinge into the see, and perisshed in the water.

33 Then the heerdmen fleed, and went there ways into the cite, and tolde every thinge, and what had fortuned vnto them that were possessed of the devyls.

34 And lo, all the cite cam out, and met Jesus. And when they sawe him they besought him, to depart out off there costes.

III.

SIR JOHN CHEKE'S TRANSLATION OF MATTHEW VIII.

And when he cãm from ye hil y^eer folowd him a greet companȝ of men, and lo á leper stood, and boud himself to him[1] and said L. if ẏow wilt ẏow maist clens me, And Jesus stretched forth his hand, and touched him and said. J wil. be thow clensed. And bí and bí his lepernes was clensed. And Jesus said vnto him, look ẏow tel no man. But go ý wais schew ýself to ye priest. And offer y^t gift which Moses cõmanded to be given y^t y^ei might beer witness ýeerof.

As Jesus cam into Capernaum, ẏeer cam an hunderder vnto him and sued vnto him on this sort. Sir mi servant[2] lieth sick in mi house of

[1] προσεκύνει. [2] παῖς.

ye palseſ, grevousli tormented. And Jesus said vnto him. I wil cõme and heel him. And ye hunderder answerd him with y^ees wordes. Sir J am not á fit man whoos house ye schold enter. Saí ye onlí ye word and mi servant[1] schal be heeled. For I am a man vnder ye power of oẏer, and have soldiers vnderneth me, and J sai to ý^s soldier go and he goeth, and to an other cõm and he cõmeth, and to mi servant do ý^s and he doth it. Jesus heering ý^s marvelled and said to y^em y^t folowed him. Trulí J sai vnto yow, J have not found so greet faith no not in Jsrl. But J sai vnto yow y^t mani schal cõm from ye Est, and ye West, and schal be set with Abraham Jsaak and Jacob in ye kingdoom of heaven, but ye childern of ye kingdoom schal be thrown in to outward darknes, ẏeer schal be wepíng and gnasching of teth. And Jesus said to ye hunderder, go ý wais and as yow belevedst, so be it vnto y^e. And his servant was heeled even in ye saam howr.

And Jesus cam in to Peters hous, and saw his moother in law laid down and sick of ye aχess,[2] and he touched her bi ye hand and ye aχes left her, and sche roos and served them.

And late in ye evening y^ei brought him mani y^t was develled, and with his word he cast out ye sprits, and healed al y^t weer il at ease, y^t Jsaíe ye p^opheets wordes which he spaak might be fulfilled. He hath taken our weaknes on him, and hath born our sickness.

And Jesus seing much resort about him cõmanded ẏem to go to ẏe fur side of ye water. And on of ye Scribes cam and said vnto him. Master J wil folow ye whiẏersoever ẏow goost. and Jesus said vnto him, Foxes hath dẽns, and ye birds of ẏ'aier hath nests, but ye sõn of man hath not wheer he mai lai his hed.

And an oẏer of his disciples said vnto him. Sir suffer me first to depart, and burí mi faẏer. And Jesus said vnto him folow me and let ye deed burí ẏeer deed.

And after he entered into á boot[3] his díscipils[4] folowed him, and lo yeer was á greet stoorm on ye see, in so much y^t ye boot was coverd with ye waves. He slept. And his discipils cãme and raised him, and said. L. save vs we perísch. And he said vnto ýem, ye smalfaithd whi be ye aferd. ẏen he roos and rebuked ye windes and ye see, and ýeer was á great calm. But ye men ẏeer marveled and saied. What maner of man is y^is y^t winds and see obeſ hím.

And after he was cõme en ye other side into ye gergeseens contree, y^eer mett hím ij develds, cõming forth from ye graves, verí fiers men,[5] so y^t no man cold pas y^t waí, and lo y^ei cried and said, what haav we

[1] παῖς. [2] πυρετος. [3] πλοῖον. [4] μαθηταὶ. [5] χαλεποὶ.

to do with ye Jesus ẏow sōn of god. Cāmest ẏow hither afoor hand to torment vs. And ẏeer was a good wai from y^{em} an herd of mani swijn feedíng. And ye devels desird him saieng. Jf ẏow cast vs forth suffer vs to go into y^{ee} heard of swijn. And he bad y^{em} goo. And y^{el} went forth, and went into ye herd of swijn. And lo ye hool heerd of swijn set on[1] y^{eer} waí bí an hedlong place[2] in tó ye see, and died in ye waters. And ye swijnherds fled and cāme into citee, and told y^{em} y^{ee} hool matter, and what taking ye develleds weer in. And loo ye hool cittee cam forth and met Jesus, and after y^{el} had seen him y^{el} desired him y^{t} he wold depart out of ẏoos coosta.

[1] ὥρμησε. [2] κατὰ τοῦ κρημνοῦ

LECTURE XII.

THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE DURING THE REIGN OF ELIZABETH.

THE Mirrour for Magistrates, to which Warton devotes much more space, and ascribes more importance than it merits, was the first conspicuous work that appeared after the accession of Elizabeth, and was moreover the most voluminous production in English poetry between the time of Lydgate and that of Spenser. It was the work of several different writers; but only one of them, Sackville, better known as the author of Gorboduc, exhibits any real poetical power.

The general plan of the work is an imitation of Boccaccio's *De Casibus Principum*, which, as I have mentioned, was made by Lydgate the groundwork of his Fall of Princes; but the personages in the Mirrour for Magistrates all belong to English history, and the narrative part of the poem is little else than a rhymed chronicle, designed to include all the tragical events known to have happened to persons distinguished in the annals of England.

The prologue by Sackville, or Induction as he calls it, is not destitute of invention, and the versification is smooth and flowing; but, both in this respect and in its allegorical representations, it is so far inferior to Spenser, that it has been deservedly eclipsed by that great author. Nor does this work possess much philological value, for it exhibits few marks of progress or change in the language. In this latter particular, it is more archaic than Surrey and Wyatt, who preceded it by a generation.

The *e* final is sometimes articulated in the possessive, though otherwise silent, as:

> With Nighte's starres thick powdred every where.

This is a point of some interest, because it helps to explain a grammatical corruption, which about this time became almost universal—the employment of the personal pronoun *his* as the sign of the possessive case.

A remnant of the old Anglo-Saxon gerundial, in its passive signification, sometimes occurs, as:

> The soile that earst so seemly was *to seen*,

seen being here used passively, instead of our modern form to be *seen*. In this case, however, *seen* is not a participle, but has the force of a true passive infinitive or gerundial.

Sackville is the principal, if not the sole, author of a more important work, which has been published both under the title of Gorboduc and of Ferrex and Porrex. This is remarkable as being the first regular tragedy in the English language, though constructed in many respects upon very different principles from the modern tragedy. The most noticeable feature of its form is the introduction of what was called the 'dumb show,' an allegorical pantomimic chorus, at the beginning of each act, and of a regular vocal chorus at the end of each except the last. The use of the former seems to have been to fill up the space between the acts with something which should serve to render less abrupt the change of time and place; for the unities are not observed in the play, and Sackville evidently thought that this departure from the canons of the classic stage ought to be in some way compensated.

The rule of unity of time and place had really no higher origin than the mechanical difficulties of scene-shifting on the primitive stage. It is fortunate for dramatic truth that modern artists have been wise enough to rise above so arbitrary a prescription. Life and nature exhibit no man's whole character,

develope and illustrate no master passion, in a single day, or upon a single scene. In the moral and intellectual, as in the physical world, time is an essential element. The events which subdue or aggravate our native propensities produce no immediate and appreciable effects upon character. Moral results are slowly unfolded, and can be seen and appreciated only by the alternate lights and shades of differently combined circumstances and varied impulses. Nature does not upheave and shape a continent at one throe, and even chemical affinity forms no instantaneous combinations of multiplied ingredients. Both the formation and the knowledge of character are gradual and slow. We know and appreciate a man only by continued observation, under different conditions of time and place and circumstance; and the characters of a drama can best be revealed, in all their completeness, only by changes of outward surroundings, and a succession of events, the occurrence of which at one place and one time implies a greater violation of the truth of life than is involved in the shifting of a scene, or the supposition that days, or weeks, or years intervene between acts of the drama which, upon the stage, are separated by an interval of but a few moments.

I have mentioned that Lord Berners's translation of Froissart was followed by the appearance of several original English chronicles, generally of slender literary merit; but the period we are now considering gave birth to a work of much greater importance, both in an historical and in a philological point of view. I refer to the Chronicle of Holinshed, which, as well as those of Hall and other early annalists, was diligently studied by Shakespeare, and must have influenced his style, as well as furnished him with historical and biographical facts. Holinshed's history of England is a compilation from various authors, some of earlier date, and some writing expressly for this undertaking. There is, therefore, naturally a great diversity and inequality of style and of literary merit. In these respects, few parts of Holinshed come up to the Life of Richard III.,

ascribed to More, still fewer to Cheke's Hurt of Sedition. The range of subjects discussed in this compilation is great; for the work attempts the natural, and partially the literary, history of England, as well as its political and its martial annals. The multiplicity of topics treated required a corresponding extent and variety of diction, and therefore this chronicle, in its several parts, constituted much the most complete and comprehensive repository of the English tongue which had yet appeared. It is hence of great value, as an exhibition of the full resources of the language of prose in the middle of Queen Elizabeth's reign.

The most curious, and, to the lexicographer at least, the most important part of this collection, is the description and history of Ireland by Richard Stanihurst, contained in the sixth volume of the edition of 1808. Stanihurst was a literary coxcomb, who had a high and apparently a well-merited reputation for learning, but who did not succeed in impressing his contemporaries with much respect for his abilities as an original writer, or even as a translator; for, like most of the literati of his time, he attempted the difficult problem of rendering the beauties of classic poetry in modern verse. He published a version of the first four books of Virgil's Æneid in hexameters, but does not seem to have found encouragement in public favour to prosecute the work. Nashe, as quoted by Warton, observes that 'Stanyhurst, the otherwise learned, trod a foul, lumbring, boisterous, wallowing measure in his translation of Virgil.' The reader will not find in the following specimen, which I take from Warton, much cause to dissent from this opinion:—

> With tentiue listning each wight was setled in harkning;
> Then father Æneas chronicled from loftie bed hautie:
> You bid me, O princesse, to scarifie a festerd old sore,
> Now that the Troians were prest by the Grecian armie.

Warton adds, 'With all this foolish pedantry, Stanyhurst was certainly a scholar. But in this translation he calls Chorebus, one of the Trojan chiefs, a *bedlamite*; he says that old Priam

girded on his sword *Morglay*,* the name of a sword in the Gothic romances; that Dido would have been glad to have been brought to bed even of a cockney, a *Dandiprat hopthumb*; and that Jupiter, in kissing his daughter, *bust his pretty prating parrot.*' The same critic quotes these lines from a piece of Stanihurst's called 'An Epitaph against rhyme,' the object of which, I suppose, was to illustrate, by example, the great superiority of the hexameter to the more modern measures, and the advantages of combining the two systems:—

> A Sara for goodnesse, a great Bellona for budgenesse,
> For myldnesse Anna, for chastitye godlye Susanna.
> Hester in a good shift, a Iudith stoute at a dead lift:
> Also Iulietta, with Dido rich Cleopatra:
> With sundrie namelesse, and women many more blamelesse, &c.

Stanihurst flourished in that brief period of philological and literary affectation which for a time threatened the language, the poetry, and even the prose of England with a degradation as complete as that of the speech and the literature of the last age of imperial Rome. This quality of style appears in its most offensive form in the nauseous rhymes of Skelton, in its most elegant in Lillie, in its most quaint and ludicrous in Stanihurst. Spenser and Shakespeare were the *Dei ex machina* who checked the ravages of this epidemic; but it still showed virulent symptoms in Sylvester, and the style of glorious Fuller and of gorgeous Browne is tinted with a glow which is all the more attractive because it is recognised as the flush of convalescence from what had been a dangerous malady.

Stanihurst's dedication of his history to 'Sir Henrie Sidneie, Lord Deputie Generall of Ireland,' is characteristic:—

> My verie good Lord, there haue beene diuerse of late, that with no small toile, and great commendation, haue throughlie imploied themselues in culling and packing togither the scrapings and fragments of

* Warton seems to have overlooked the obvious etymology of this name, which is Romance, not Gothic, it being a compound of mort and glaive.

the historie of Ireland. Among which crue, my fast friend, and inward companion, maister Edmund Campion did so learnedlie bequite himselfe, in the penning of certeine breefe notes, concerning that countrie, as certes it was greatlie to be lamented, that either his theame had not beene shorter, or else his leasure had not beene longer. For if Alexander were so rauisht with Homer his historie, that notwithstanding Thersites were a crabbed and a rugged dwarfe, being in outward feature so deformed, and in inward conditions so crooked, as he seemed to stand to no better steed, than to lead apes in hell: yet the valiant capteine, weighing how liuelie the golden poet hath set forth the ouglie dandeprat in his colours, did sooner wish to be Homer his Thersites, than to be the Alexander of that doltish rithmour, which vntertooke with his woodden verses to blase his famous and martiall exploits: how much more ought Ireland (being in sundrie ages seized of diuerse good and coragious Alexanders) sore to long and thirst after so rare a clarke as maister Campion, who was so vpright in conscience, so deepe in iudgement, so ripe in eloquence, as the countrie might haue beene well assured to haue had their historie trulie reported, pithilie handled, and brauelie polished.

Howbeit although the glose of his fine abbridgment, being matcht with other mens dooings, bare a surpassing kind of excellencie: yet it was so hudled up in haste, as in respect of a Campion his absolute perfection, it seemed rather to be a woorke roughlie hewed, than smoothlie planed. Vpon which ground the gentlemen being willing that his so tender a suckling, hauing as yet but greene bones, should haue been swadled and rockt in a cradle, till in tract of time the ioints thereof were knit, and growen stronger: yet notwithstanding he was so crost in the nicke of this determination, that his historie in mitching wise wandred through sundrie hands, and being therewithall in certeine places somewhat tickle toonged (for maister Campion did learne it to speake) and in other places ouer spare, it twitled more tales out of schoole, and drowned weightier matters in silence, than the author (vpon better view and longer search) would haue permitted. Thus much being by the sager sort pondered, and the perfection of the historie earnestlie desired: I, as one of the most that could doo least, was fully resolued to inrich maister Campion his chronicle, with further additions. But weighing on the other side, that my course packthred could not haue beene sutablie knit with his fine silke, and what a disgrace it were, bungerlie to botch vp a rich garment, by clouting it with patches of sundrie colours, I was forthwith reclaimed from my former resolution, reckoning it for better, that my pen should walke in such wise in that

craggie and balkish waie, as the truth of the matter being forprised, I would neither openlie borrow, nor priuilie imbezell aught to anie great purpose from his historie. But as I was hammering that worke by stealths on the anuill, I was giuen to vnderstand by some of mine acquaintance, that others had brought our raw historie to that ripenesse, as my paine therein would seeme but needlesse. Wherevpon being willing to be eased of the burden, and loath also in lurching wise to forstall any man his trauell, I was contented to leue them thumping in the forge, and quietlie to repaire to mine vsuall and pristinat studies, taking it not to stand with good maners, like a flittering flie to fall in an other man his dish. Howbeit the little paine I tooke therein was not so secretlie mewed within my closet, but it slipt out at one chinke or other, and romed so farre abroad, as it was whispered in their eares who before were in the historie busied. The gentlemen conceiuing a greater opinion of me than I was well able to vphold, dealt verie effectuallie with me, that as well at their instance, as for the affection I bare my natiue countrie, I would put mine helping hand to the building and perfecting of so commendable a worke. Hauing breathed for a few daies on this motion, albeit I knew that my worke was plumed with downe, and at that time was not sufficientlie feathered to flie: yet I was by them weied not to beare my selfe coy, by giuing my entier friends in so reasonable a request a squemish repulse. Wherefore, my singular good lord, hereis laid downe to your lordship his view a briefe discourse, with a iagged historie of a ragged wealepublike. Yet as naked as at the first blush it seemeth, if it shall stand with your honor his pleasure (whom I take to be an expert lapidarie) at vacant houres to insearch it, you shall find therein stones of such estimation, as are worth to be coucht in rich and pretious collars. And in especiall your lordship, aboue all others, in that you haue the charge of that countrie, maie here be schooled, by a right line to leuell your gouernement. For in perusing this historie, you shall find vice punished, vertue rewarded, rebellion suppressed, loialtie exalted, haughtinesse disliked, courtesie beloued, briberie detested, iustice imbraced, polling officers to their perpetuall shame reprooued, and vpright gouernours to their eternall fame extolled. And trulie to my thinking such magistrats as meane to have a vigilant eie to their charge, cannot bestow their time better, than when they sequester themselues from the affaires of the wealepublike, to recreat and quicken their spirits by reading the chronicles that decipher the gouernement of a wealepublike. For as it is no small commendation for one to beare the dooings of manie, so it breedeth great admiration, generallie to haue

all those qualities in one man harboured, for whiche particularlie diuerse are eternised. And who so will be addicted to the reading of histories, shall readilie find diuerse euents worthie to be remembered, and sundrie sound examples dailie to be followed. Vpon which ground the learned haue, not without cause, adiudged an historie to be the marrow of reason, the creame of experience, the sap of wisdome, the pith of iudgement, the librarie of knowledge, the kernell of policie, the vnfoldresse of treacherie, the kalender of time, the lanterne of truth, the life of memorie, the doctresse of behauiour, the register of antiquitie, the trumpet of chiualrie. And that our Irish historie being diligentlie heeded, yeeldeth all these commodities, I trust the indifferent reader, vpon the vntwining thereof, will not denie. But if anie man his stomach shall be found so tenderlie niced, or so deintilie spiced, as that he maie not, forsooth, digest the grosse draffe of so base a countrie, I doubt not but your lordship, who is thoroughlie acquainted with the woorthinesse of the Iland, will be soone persuaded to leaue such quaint and licourous repastours, to feed on their costlie and delicate woodcocks, and willinglie to accept the louing present of your heartie welwiller. The gift is small, the giuer his good will is great: I stand in good hope, that the greatnesse of the one will counterpoise the smalnesse of the other. Wherefore that I maie the sooner vnbroid the pelfish trash that is wrapt within this treatise, I shalle craue your lordship to lend me either your ears in hearing, or your eies in reading the tenor of the discourse following.

I add the following passages from pp. 6, 7, for the sake of the odd speculations on language. It is noticeable that among the words mentioned by Stanihurst, near the end of the extract, as having been borrowed by the Irish from the English, are *coat* and *gown*. These are two of the words cited by Davies as sufficient proof to 'convict' the Englishman 'of belonging to a race that partakes largely of Celtic blood.' I have no doubt that Davies is an abler philologist than Stanihurst; but Stanihurst is good evidence to show that these words were not claimed as Celtic in Celtic Ireland itself, three hundred years ago.

I find it solemnlie aduouched, aswell in some of the Irish pamphlets as in Girald. Camb. that Gathelus or Gaidelus, & after him Simon Brecke, deuised the Irish language out of all other toongs then extant

in the world. And thereof (saith Cambrensis) it is called Gaidelach, partlie of Gaidelus the first founder, and partlie for that it is compounded of all languages. But considering the course of interchanging and blending of speeches togither, not by inuention of art, but by vse of talke, I am rather led to beléeue (séeing Ireland was inhabited within one yeare after the diuision of toongs) that Bastolenus, a branch of Japhet, who first seized vpon Ireland, brought thither the same kind of spéech, some of the 72 that to this familie befell at the desolation of Babell. Vnto whom succeeded the Scithians, Grecians, Egyptians, Spaniards, Danes, of all which the toong must néeds have borowed part, but especiallie reteining the steps of Spanish then spoken in Granado, as from their mightiest ancestors. Since then to Henrie Fitzempresse the conqueror no such inuasion happened them, as whereby they might be driuen to infect their natiue language, vntouched in manner for the space of seuenteene hundred yeares after the arriuall of Iberius. It séemeth to borrow of the Spanish the common phrase, Commestato, that is, How doo you? or how fareth it with you? It fetchetch sundrie words from the Latine, as arget of *Argentum*, monie; salle of *sæl*, salt; cappoulle of *Caballus*, a plough horse, or (according vnto the old English terme) a caball or caple: birreat of the old motheaten Latine word *Birretum*, a bonnet. The toong is sharpe and sententious, & offereth great occasion to quicke apophthegms and proper allusions. Wherefore their common iesters and rimers, whom they terme Bards, are said to delight passinglie these that conceiue the grace and propertie of the toong. But the true Irish indéed differeth so much from that they commonlie speake, that scarse one in fiue hundred can either read, write, or vnderstand it. Therefore it is preserued among certeine of their poets and antiquaries. And in verie déed the language carrieth such difficultie with it, what for the strangenesse of the phrase, and the curious featnes of the pronuntiation, that a verie few of the countrie can atteine to the perfection thereof, and much lesse a forrener or stranger.

A gentleman of mine acquaintance reported, that he did see a woman in Rome, which was possessed with a babling spirit, that could haue chatted anie language sauing the Irish; and that it was so difficult, as the verie deuell was grauelled therewith. A gentleman that stood by answered, that he tooke the speech to be so sacred and holie, that no damned féend had the power to speake it; no more than they are able to saie (as the report goeth) the verse of saint John the euangelist, 'Et verbum caro factum est.' Naie by God his mercie man (quoth the other) I stand in doubt (I tell you) whether the apostles in their

copious mart of languages at Jerusalem could haue spoken Irish, if they were apposed: whereat the companie heartilie laughed. As fluent as the Irish toong is, yet it lacketh diuerse words, and borroweth them verbatim of the English. As there is no vulgar Irish word (vnlesse there be some od terme that lurketh in anie obscure shrowds or other of their storehouse) for a cote, a gowne, a dublet, an hat, a drinking cup: but onelie they vse the same words with a little inflexion. They vse also the contracted English phrase, God morrow, that is to saie, God giue you a good morning.

The space I have devoted to Stanihurst may seem out of proportion to his merits; but I have dwelt upon him as perhaps the most characteristic specimen of the very numerous, though short-lived, class to which he belongs—a class which has exercised a more important and, I must add, in the end beneficial, influence on the English language than appears to have been generally allowed. The straining after effect, which is so visible in these writers, led them to employ the widest vocabulary within their reach, and to experiment upon all possible combinations of words. Their extravagances were soon made ridiculous by the purer style of the generation of authors which immediately followed them, and while they were, but for a very brief period, dangerous by the force of their example, their affluence and variety of diction long served as a repository of verbal wealth, which succeeding literature has largely drawn upon.

I have spoken of the literary and philological affectation of Stanihurst's time, as having assumed its most elegant form in the works of Lillie, the Euphuist. Though the quality of style called Euphuism has more or less prevailed in all later periods of English literature, the name which designates it had become almost obsolete and forgotten, until Scott revived it in his character of Sir Piercie Shafton. The word is taken from Euphues,* the name of the hero of a tale by John Lillie, the first part of which is entitled Euphues, the anatomie of Wit;

* The Greek εὐφυής means well-grown, symmetrical; also clever, witty, and this is the sense in which Lillie applies it to his hero.

the second, Euphues and his England. It consists of the history and correspondence of a young Athenian, who, after spending some time in Italy, visits England, in the year 1579; and as this was the period when the author flourished, it was, of course, a story of the time of its appearance. The plot is a mere thread for an endless multitude of what were esteemed fine sayings to be strung upon, or, as Lillie himself expresses it, 'fine phrases, smooth quips, merry taunts, jesting without meane and mirth without measure.' The formal characteristics of Euphuism are alliteration and verbal antithesis. Its rhetorical and intellectual traits will be better understood by an example, than by a critical analysis. An extract from the dedication of the second edition to the author's 'Very good friends, the Gentlemen Scholers of Oxford,' may serve as a specimen. It is as follows: —

There is no *p*rivilege that needeth a *p*ardon, neither is there any *re*mission to be asked, where a *com*mission is granted. I speake this, Gentlemen, not to excuse the *of*fence which is *taken*, but to offer a *de*fence where I was *mistaken*. A *c*leare *c*onscience is a sure *c*ard, truth hath the *p*rerogatiue to speake with *p*lainnesse, and the modesty to heare with *p*atience. It was reported of some, and beleueed of many, that in the education of Ephœbus, where mention is made of Uniuersities, that Oxford was to much either de*faced* or de*famed*. I know not what the enuious have picked out by malice, or the curious by wit, or the guilty by their own galled consciences; but this I say, that I was as farre from thinking *ill* as I find them from iudging *well*. But if I should goe about to make *amends*, I were then faulty in somewhat *amisse*, and should shew my selfe like Apelles Prentice, who coueting to *m*end the *n*ose *m*arred the *n*eck; and not vnlike the foolish Dier, who neuer thought his cloth *b*lack vntil it was *b*urned. If any fault be committed, impute it to Euphues who knew you not, not to Lylie who hates you not. Yet I may of all the rest most condemne Oxford of vnkindnesse, of vice I cannot, who seemed to weane me before she brought me forth, and to giue me bones to gnaw before I could get the teat to suck. Wherein she played the nice mother, in sending me into the Country to nurse, where I tyred at a dry breast three yeeres, and was at the last enforced to weane my selfe. But it was destiny, for if I had not bin gathered from the tree

in the bud, I should being blowne haue proued a blast: and as good it is to be an addle Egge, as an idle bird.

Euphues at his arriuall I am assured will view Oxford, where he will either recant his sayings, or renue his complaints: he is now on the seas; and how he hath beene tossed I know not: but whereas I thought to receiue him at Douer, I must meet him at Hampton. Nothing can hinder his comming but death, neither anything hasten his departure but vnkindnesse.

Concerning my selfe, I haue alwayes thought so reuerently of Oxford, of the Schollers, and of their manner, that I seemed to be rather an Idolater than a blasphemer. They that inuented this toy were vnwise, and they that reported it, vnkind, and yet none of them can proue me vnhonest. But suppose I glaunced at some abuses; did not Iupiters egge bring forth as well Helen a light huswife in earth as Castor a bright starre in heauen? The Estrich that taketh the greatest pride in her feathers, picked some blast: no countenance but hath some blemish; and shall Oxford then be blameless? I wish it were so, but I cannot think it is so. But as it is, it may be better: and were it badder, it is not the worst. I thinke there are few Vniuersities that haue lesse faults than Oxford, many that haue more, none but haue some. But I commit my cause to the consciences of those that either know what I am, or can guesse what I should be: the one will answer themselues in construing friendly, the other if I knew them, I would satisfie reasonably.

Thus loth to incur the suspicion of vnkindnesse in not telling my mind, and not willing to make any excuse where there needs no amends, I can neither craue pardon, lest I should confesse a fault, nor conceale my meaning, lest I should be thought a foole. And so I end yours assured to use.

The success of Euphues was very great. The work was long a vade-mecum with the fashionable world, and considered a model of elegance in writing and the highest of authorities in all matters of courtly and polished speech. It contains, with all its affectations, a great multitude of acute observations, and just and even profound thoughts; and it was these striking qualities, not less than the tinsel of its style, which commended it to the practical good sense of contemporary England.

The style of Sir Philip Sidney, one of the brightest ornaments of the elegant prose literature of his day, is not a little affected

by the prevalent taste for the conceits of euphuism, though he introduces them much less frequently than Lillie; for they form the staple of Lillie's diction, while they are but occasional blemishes in that of Sidney. Sidney is, however, much less dexterous and graceful in the use of alliteration, consonance, and antithesis, than the great improver, if not the inventor, of this artificial style. With Sir Philip, they are so laboured and unnatural, as almost always to produce an appearance of clumsiness and want of skill, rather than of mastery, in a trifling art; while from the pen of Lillie they flow as easily as if he could speak no other dialect.

Sidney's tedious romance, the Arcadia, much admired when first published, is now deservedly almost forgotten; but his ingenious and eloquent Defence of Poesy will always maintain a high place in the æsthetical literature of England. It is not only an earnest and persuasive argument, but is, in style and diction, the best secular prose yet written in England, and indeed the earliest specimen of real critical talent in the literature.

The poems of Sidney, though relatively less remarkable than the Defence of Poesy, and more frequently disfigured by trivial conceits, are, nevertheless, conspicuous for propriety and elegance of language, and ease and grace of versification. Some of them are in classic metres, but the best perhaps are those fashioned after Italian models, and especially the sonnets. But the resemblance of these poems to those whose versification and stanza they imitate is, as in the case of Surrey, formal merely; for they are English, not Italian, in thought, and their diction has borrowed nothing from the language of Italy.

The favour of the English public was next divided between two authors, one of whom is now almost wholly forgotten, and the other is, after a temporary oblivion, now again reviving and recovering his just position as one of the greatest of English poets. I refer to Sylvester, the translator of the works of Du Bartas, a contemporary French writer, and to Spenser, the

author of the Faery Queene, the Shepherd's Calendar, and other minor works.

The principal poem of Du Bartas, which is a history of the Creation, was written in a sufficiently inflated style; but this was exaggerated by Sylvester, who added many peculiarities of his own, such, among others, as compound, or rather agglutinated, words made up of half a dozen radicals.* Its poetical merit is slender, but the translation is not without philological interest, because it contains a considerable number of words and forms, of which examples are hardly to be met with elsewhere, and there are passages which serve as commentaries and explanations of obscure expressions in Shakespeare, and other dramatic authors of the time. It is, however, difficult to understand how an age that produced a Shakespeare could bestow such unbounded applause on a Du Bartas and a Sylvester.

Spenser was reproached in his own time with an excess of archaisms; but the real fault of his diction lies rather in the use of forms and expressions which had become obsolete because they deserved to perish, for which no good authority could be cited, and which were, probably, unauthorized coinages of the inferior poets from whom Spenser took them, or in many cases perhaps licenses of his own. In the employment of words of these classes, he is often far from happy, but in the mastery of the true English of his time, in acute sensibility of ear and exquisite skill in the musical arrangement of words, he has no superior in the whole compass of English literature.

It does not come within my plan to criticise the allegory of the Faery Queene, and indeed he must be a superstitious critic, whom the defects of the plot, and its allegorical character, deter from enjoying the endless beauties of detail with which this most charming poem overflows.

The most striking peculiarity of Spenser's diction is analogous to that which I have before mentioned as one of Chaucer's greatest merits — a rare felicity in verbal combinations — and in

* See First Series, Lecture ix. p. 204.

Spenser it chiefly consists in a very nice sense of congruity in the choice and application of epithets. His adjectives not only qualify the noun, but they are so adapted to it, that they heighten or intensify its appropriate meaning; and they are often used with a reference to the radical sense of the noun, which shows that Spenser knew how to press even etymology into use as a means of the embellishment of poetical diction.

The Faery Queene is at present more studied, I believe, than it was a century since; but the Shepherd's Calendar, which is less familiarly known, is full of most exquisite poetry, and the minor works of Spenser are scarcely less interesting to the reader of taste, and to the philologist, than his great allegorical epic.

Most of the works of Lord Bacon belong to the following century, and therefore do not come within the period to which our inquiries are limited; but Bacon's most popular and most immediately influential production, his Essays, appeared in 1596, and there is scarcely a volume in the whole prose literature of England, which is, more emphatically, at once a product of the English intellect, and an agency in the history of English practical ethics. The style of the Essays is very attractive, though never pedantically exact, and often even negligent, in its observance of the rules of grammatical concord and regimen; but though many Latinized words are introduced, even its solecisms are English, and it is, in all probability, a fair picture of the language used at that time by men of the highest culture, in the conversational discussion of questions of practical philosophy, or what the Germans call *world-wisdom*. It is didactic in character, and though it offered nothing new to the English heart, it revealed much to the English consciousness, of that day. It is a formulating of the living ethics and social opinions of the cultivated Briton of Elizabeth's age, a distinct expression of sentiments and of principles which the nation had been trained to act upon, though most often no doubt unconsciously; and its immediate success was owing to its immediate and

universal recognition as an embodiment of the national law of life, which all had felt, but none had yet presented to the mind in a recorded objective form.

We have now followed the great current of the English speech to near the point where we propose to terminate our investigations; but there are several tributaries and sources of its philological improvement, which require a somewhat detailed examination before our survey can be said to be approximately complete.

The revival of the study of classical literature, after a short suspension, and the impulse which had been given to modern philology by the publication of Palsgrave's French Grammar, led to the production of a considerable number of English grammars. These have now become exceedingly rare, and are almost forgotten. So far as I can judge from the few I have seen, the writers, misled by their partiality for the ancient languages and literature, occupied themselves less with inquiry into the facts and principles of English philology, than with speculations upon improvements which might be introduced into the syntax and orthography of their native speech. They are seldom to be relied upon as evidence with regard to the actual practice of the best native writers, and still less, as to the true theory of the English tongue. The great authors of the fourteenth and earlier centuries were little studied, Anglo-Saxon was forgotten, and the cognate languages of Germany and the North were almost unknown. Hence these treatises, instead of being, as all grammars ought to be, chiefly historical, are speculative, and designed to effect a reform or re-construction of the language. Even Ben Jonson's grammar — which is known to us only in a sketch or abridgment, the manuscript of the complete work having been destroyed by fire — though a learned and able production, is, in many particulars, not sustained by the practice of good authors or even by his own.*

In one respect, however, these old grammars are interesting,

* See First Series, Lecture v. p. 108.

if not harmonious and intelligible enough to be really instructive. I refer to their theories of orthography and pronunciation, which are curious and often ingenious. But phonology was not then known as a science, the radical sounds had not yet been analyzed, and the writers were generally ignorant of the orthoepy of the Gothic languages. Besides this, the pronunciation of English was strangely discordant in different shires, and it is impossible to reconcile these orthoepists with each other or with themselves.*

Many eminent native scholars, such for example as Ascham, systematically decried the English language as a barbarous jargon incapable of polish or refinement, and unfit to be the vehicle of the inspirations of poetry, or of elegant literature in prose. Sidney, much to his honour, defends the capacities of the English tongue for the highest culture, and it is a striking proof of his philological insight, that he was among the first of modern scholars to perceive the advantage of an uninflected structure, and of a syntax founded directly on the logical, not the formal, relation of words.†

Though Ascham was theoretically opposed to the employment of English for literary purposes, or even in discussing the simple and popular subject of archery, yet he showed no inconsiderable power in the use of it, and his Schoolmaster, as well as his other English writings, were highly useful in his time, and were, in all respects, important contributions to the literature of that age.

Artistic theory and criticism have been plants of slow growth in English literature. As I have said in relation to morals, the Englishman, in every branch of mental as well as of physical effort, inclines to action rather than to speculation. He trusts to his instincts and his common sense to guide him, and leaves it to others to philosophise upon the organic principles which

* See First Series, Lecture, xxii.

† For the opinions of Ascham on the English language, and for those of other scholars of his and the immediately preceding centuries, see First Series, Lecture xxi. pp. 444, 445; for those of Sidney, see same volume, Lecture iv. p. 88.

have determined the shape and character of his productions. The age of Elizabeth, however, gave birth to some works in critical and artistical theory. One of the most conspicuous of these is Puttenham's Arte of English Poesie, first published in 1589. It is, as the author expresses it, 'Contriued into three Bookes: The first of Poets and Poesie, the second of Proportion, the third of Ornament.' This treatise shows some learning and some observation, but no very accurate critical appreciation of the authors it attempts to characterise. As to the more conspicuous ornaments of old English literature, it is true, posterity has confirmed many of Puttenham's judgments, at least as to the relative rank of the authors, though not always for his reasons. But, on the other hand, he speaks of the dull rhyming chronicler, Harding, as 'a Poet Epick or Historicall,' who 'handled himselfe well according to the time and maner of his subiect;' he extravagantly commends many of his now forgotten contemporaries, and concludes his meagre list of those 'who in any age haue bene the most commended writers in oure English Poesie,' with this 'censure' upon Queen Elizabeth: 'But last in recitall and first in degree is the Queene, our soueraigne Lady, whose learned, delicate, noble Muse, easily surmounteth all the rest that haue writtē before her time or since, for sence, sweetnesse and subtillitie, be it in Ode, Elegie, Epigram, or any other kinde of poeme, Heroick or Lyricke, wherein it shall please her Maiestie to employ her penne, euen by as much oddes as her owne excellent estate and degree exceedeth all the rest of her most humble vassalls.'

The most valuable part of this work is that which treats of the formal requisites of poetry, and especially of versification, because it throws a good deal of light on the pronunciation of that age—a subject respecting which we are far from being well informed. When, however, we compare these chapters of Puttenham with what had long before been accomplished in the Romance languages in the same branch of criticism—for example, with the Provençal Flors del Gay Saber, estier dichas

Las Leys d' Amors, of the fourteenth century, published by Gatien Arnoult—we must admit that the technicalities of the poetic art, if instinctively practised, had been as yet but imperfectly discussed in England.

The Reformation, as has been before observed, had occasioned the translation of many moral and religious works from the Latin, and thereby enriched the theological dialect. Some essays in the translation of secular Latin and Greek authors were made in the early part of the sixteenth century; but the reaction against classical learning, which succeeded to the impulse given to it by the Reformation, checked this branch of literary effort, and not many further attempts were made in it until the study of Greek and Latin came again into vogue after the accession of Elizabeth. Versions of ancient authors, Latin especially, were now made in great numbers, and there are few writers of eminence in the literature of Rome, not many in that of Greece, who did not receive an English dress.

Notwithstanding all that has been said, by Johnson and others, upon the influence of translation in corrupting language, I believe there is no one source of improvement to which English is so much indebted, as to the versions of classical authors which were executed between the middle of the sixteenth century and the death of Elizabeth. English, though much enriched, was still wanting in copiousness, and there existed no such acquaintance with Anglo-Saxon that any of its defects could be supplied from that source. Hence Latin and French were the only fountains from which scholars could draw, and translations from those languages not only introduced new words, but what was scarcely less important, new combinations of words for expressing complex ideas.

They performed still another very signal service, which has been almost wholly overlooked by writers who have treated of the philological history of England. The variety of subjects discussed, and of styles employed by the classical writers, obliged the translators, not only to borrow or to coin new words,

where no native terms existed for the expression of the thoughts they sought to render, but to seek, in English literature new and old, in popular speech, and in the nomenclature of the liberal and the mechanical arts, domestic equivalents for a vast multitude of words, whose places could not be supplied by the transference of Latin terms, because these would have been unintelligible. Hence these translations did not merely enrich the language by an infusion of new philological elements, but they gathered up, recorded, and thus preserved for future study and use, the whole extent of the vocabulary then known to the English nation. This process is particularly observable in the old versions of the more encyclopedic authors, such as Plutarch's Lives and his Morals. The Lives were translated by North, about the middle of Elizabeth's reign, from the admirable French version of Amyot, and though occasional errors in rendering were committed by both Amyot and North, the style of Plutarch is upon the whole more faithfully represented by this old and quaint version than by any of the later attempts.

Pliny's Natural History and Plutarch's Morals came later. They, as well as Livy and some other voluminous Latin works, were translated by Philemon Holland, at about the close of Elizabeth's reign, and they constitute an inexhaustible mine of linguistic wealth. Pliny's Natural History was designed as a complete treatise upon all the branches of material knowledge known to the ancient world. The learning of the Greeks and Romans on these subjects was very little inferior to that of England in Elizabeth's time, and few branches of science, or of practical art, were at all cultivated at that period, which are not represented and fully discussed by Pliny. Hence the translation of the Natural History required the employment of the entire English nomenclature of physical learning and of mechanical craft. Holland's version exhausts the technical vocabulary of his age, thus gathering, in a single volume, the whole of the material side of the English language, and constituting the

most valuable and comprehensive source of information upon old English names of processes, of things, and of the sensuous properties of things, which exists in a collected form.

The most celebrated translators of Latin verse in Elizabeth's time were Phaer or Phaier, and Golding. The former 'traduced,' as some old writers have it, the first nine books of Virgil's Æneid, and the latter, with more ability, translated Ovid's Metamorphoses and many other Latin works, in prose as well as verse. Of Master Phaer, I suppose my readers will not care to know more, after perusing Virgil's account of the building of Carthage by the Moors under Queen Dido, as Englished by him:—

The Moores with courage went to worke,
  some vnder burdens grones:
Some at the wals and towrs with hands
  were tumbling vp the stones.
Some measurd out a place to build
  their mansion house within:
Some lawes and officers to make
  in parlment did begin.
An other had an hauen cast,
  and deepe they trench the ground,
Some other for the games and plaies
  a statelie place had found.
And pillers great they cut for kings,
  to garnish foorth their wals,
And like as bees among the flours,
  when fresh the summer fals,
In shine of sunne applie their worke,
  when growne is vp their yoong:
Or when their hiues they gin to stop,
  and honie sweet is sproong,
That all their caues and cellars close
  with dulcet liquor fils,
Some doo outlade, some other bring
  the stuffe with readie wils.
Sometime they ioine, and all at once
  doo from their mangers fet

The slothful drones, that would consume,
and nought would doo to get.
The worke it heats, the honie smels,
of flours and thime ywet, &c. &c.

Golding's Ovid is a spirited and creditable work, and at that date, 1567, the condition of the language would hardly have admitted of a better. Warton bestows well-merited praise on his version of the transformation of Athamas and Ino in the fourth book of the Metamorphoses, and there are many other passages not inferior in excellence.

I cannot say so much in favour of Golding's Epistle or Dedication — a summary, or rhymed table of contents, of his author — or of his Preface to the Reader, supposed by Warton to have been designed for the comfort of the 'weaker Puritans,' or 'simple sort,' as Golding calls them, who might be scandalised at the heathen profanity and idolatry of Ovid. If the Puritans of that day thought Ovid forbidden fruit, and were 'simple' enough to be converted to a belief in the lawfulness of reading him by no better arguments than Golding's, they must have been 'weak' indeed; and I suspect stout John Knox — Golding's contemporary, and perhaps his countryman* — would have required stronger logic to persuade him of the innocence of anything he held to be wrong.

During the period we are considering, the English language received numerous and important accessions from travel and commerce, which were enlarging with the rapid progress of geographical discovery. Many descriptive accounts of foreign countries were printed, and the public curiosity welcomed with avidity narratives of adventure and observation in distant lands. Foreigners from remote nations visited England, new wares were introduced, the tropical world had been recently opened

* I do not know upon how good authority Warton pronounces Golding to have been a native of London. The epistle is dated at 'Barwicke,' and in my copy, London, 1595, a manuscript note, in an old hand, states that Golding was 'a Scot.'

to Christian observation, and new stores of natural knowledge flowed in from regions which had been unknown to Europe from the commencement of the historical era.

The Fardle of Facions, a description of the manners and customs of the different nations of the world, translated from the Latin and printed about the year 1550, is one of the earliest and most curious books of this class, and, for its extent, philologically one of the most interesting. It was soon succeeded by more voluminous works in the same department, among which the most valuable are, the Decades of Peter Martyr, the travels of Vertomannus in the East, and some other works which were reprinted about fifty years ago in a quarto volume intended as a supplement to Hakluyt. But these are all surpassed in importance by Hakluyt's collection of voyages and travels, first published in 1589, which not only exhibits a great range of vocabulary, but contains many narratives of no small degree of literary merit.

It is perhaps to the excited curiosity produced by these works that we are to ascribe, in part at least, the progress which the study of the Oriental languages, the Arabic especially, made in England in the sixteenth century. The knowledge of Arabic promoted that of the cognate Hebrew, and the effects of this learning are visible in the revision of the English Scriptures by the translators appointed by King James, several of whom possessed an amount of Oriental learning rare in later ages of English literary history.

There are also certain other branches of knowledge, or, at least, of study, which, though specialities, nevertheless exerted a considerable influence upon the general language both of common life and of books. I refer to the nomenclature of natural science, of alchemy, of astrology, and of the professions of medicine and the law. These, indeed, are not generally regarded as embraced in the term literature, but abundant traces of them are found in literature; for it has been seriously argued, from Shakespeare's familiarity with legal terms, that

he must have been an attorney's clerk, at the least, if not a practising lawyer, just as similar evidence has been cited to prove that he was a good classical scholar and an experienced navigator, and, as it might be, to show that he was a medical man, because he makes one of his characters say that 'parmacity was good for an inward bruise.'

In the sixteenth century speculation was rife in all the pursuits I have mentioned; and by virtue of that common bond which has long been recognised as existing between all knowledges, and more especially in consequence of the changefulness of this restless modern life of ours, there is a perpetual intermingling and amalgamation of all classes, professions, and dialects. The result is that the technical words of every science, every art, are continually wandering out from the laboratory and the workshop, and incorporating themselves into the common speech of the ignorant as well as of the learned; and there is scarcely a human pursuit from which the every-day language of England has not borrowed, appropriated, and generalised more or fewer terms of art.

Although, as I have often remarked, the dialect of theology was a special nomenclature, yet the fact, that theology was studied as a branch of general education, made its dialect more familiar than that of any other single art or science, and through the sixteenth century it maintained its relative importance as an elevating, refining, and at the same time enriching, and essentially progressive influence. Besides a vast mass of strictly professional works in the department of theology, the last half of the sixteenth century produced numerous editions and revisals of the English Scriptures, the universal circulation of which influenced the speech of England in a variety of ways, but most especially in counteracting the tendency of secular literature to the adoption of a Latinised phraseology and syntax; for all the Protestant English versions of the Bible are ultimately founded on Wycliffe, and are all remarkable for the purity of their Anglo-Saxon diction.

Next in importance to the translations of the Bible as a conservative influence in English philology, we must rank the liturgy of the Anglican church, which, in its various forms, belongs to the reign of Edward VI. and Elizabeth. The diction of this ritual is as conspicuous for the Anglo-Saxon character of the style as the English Bibles, and the daily repetition of portions of its contents, by almost the whole population of England, could not but have had a powerful effect in fashioning the speech, and tincturing the written dialect, of the English people.

The diction of theology, perhaps I should say of English prose, reached its highest point of excellence in the works of Hooker, the first four books of whose Ecclesiastical Polity were printed in 1594, the fifth in 1597. The style of Hooker is sometimes unnecessarily involved and obscure, and he is fond of Latinisms, both in words and in the arrangement of his periods. One of the latter class is the inversion by which the participle in the compound tenses, and the adjective, precede the nominative, as, for example: 'Brought already we are even to that estate which Gregorie Nazianzen mournefullie describeth;' 'able we are not to deny, but that we have deserved the hatred of the heathen;' 'Dangerous it were for the feeble braine of man to wade farre into the doings of the most High.' This is the usual Latin order of arrangement, and it was a favorite construction with all the translators of the period we are considering. Hooker is perhaps the first English prose writer who exhibits philosophical precision and uniformity in the use of words, and this is the peculiarity of his style which gives it its greatest philological value. This nicety of discrimination he extends even to particles, a remarkable instance of which is the distinction between *sith* and *sithence*, or *since*, the former being always an illative or argumentative word, the latter simply narrative, indicating *time after*. I cannot say that this distinction was invented by Hooker, but it certainly is not much older than his time, though a tendency towards it begins to be observable soon after the middle of the sixteenth century. Hooker is, so far as

I know, the only important English author who constantly observes this very important logical difference, though, indeed, it is not often overlooked by his contemporaries, Spenser and Sylvester. Hooker's periods are sometimes cumbrous and involved, partly from the influence of his devotion to Latin theological literature, and partly from his desire to accompany his general propositions with the conditions, qualifications, and limitations belonging to them; but he has many passages of the most admirable rhetorical beauty, and of a musical flow not less melodious than that of the periods of Milton.

I have observed that no great English writer has ever been wholly able to suppress the quality of humour. Hooker would be claimed as an exception, and in truth he is one of the gravest of authors, but one cannot but suspect that a smile is lurking under some of the illustrations which accompany his most serious arguments. Thus, having declared that God works nothing without cause, he instances the creation of woman, which he intimates was an afterthought, and declares that God's 'will had never inclined' to perform it, 'but that he saw it could not be wel, if she were *not* created.' In this, he seems to have meant a half jocose expression of the same sentiments to which John Knox had, not many years before, given such passionate utterrance in his ungenerous, but very eloquent First Blast of the Trumpet against the monstrous Regiment of Women.

Hooker's works are a chain from which it is hard to detach a link, without a fracture. The continuity of his style is one of its merits, and no very good idea of his manner is to be gained from single paragraphs. There are two or three regular stock quotations from Hooker, which are always produced as samples, when his literary merits are under discussion, and they are therefore somewhat familiar to the 'reading public;' but I am afraid there are many D.D.s, whose only knowledge of this great writer is derived from those passages. I can afford space only for the second chapter of the first book of the 'Ecclesiasticall Politie,' which I print from the rare edition of 1594.

All things that are haue some operation not violent or casuall. Neither doth any thing euer begin to exercise the same without some foreconceaued ende for which it worketh. And the ende which it worketh for is not obteined, vnlesse the worke be also fit to obteine it by. For vnto euery ende euery operation will not serue. That which doth assigne vnto each thing the kinde, that which doth moderate the force and power, that which doth appoint the forme and measure of working, the same we tearme a Lawe. So that no certaine end could euer be attained, vnlesse the actions whereby it is attained were regular, that is to say, made suteable fit and correspondent vnto their end, by some Canon rule or lawe. Which thing doth first take place in the workes euen of God himselfe. All things therefore do worke after a sort according to lawe: all other things according to a lawe, whereof some superiour, vnto whome they are subiect, is author; only the workes and operations of God haue him both for their worker, and for the lawe whereby they are wrought. The being of God is a kinde of lawe to his working: for that perfection which God is, geueth perfection to that he doth. Those naturall, necessary, and internal operations of God, the *generation* of the Sonne, the *proceeding* of the Spirit, are without the compasse of my present intent: which is to touch only such operations as haue their beginning and being by a voluntarie purpose, wherewith God hath eternally decreed when and howe they should be. Which eternall decree is that wee tearme an eternall lawe. Dangerous it were for the feeble braine of man to wade farre into the doings of the most High, whome although to knowe be life, and ioy to make mention of his name: yet our soundest knowledge is to know that we know him not as in deed he is, neither can know him: and our safest eloquence concerning him is our silence, when we confesse without confession that his glory is inexplicable, his greatnes aboue our capacitie and reach. He is aboue, and we vpon earth, therefore it behoueth our wordes to be warie and fewe. Our God is one, or rather verie *onenesse*, and meere vnitie, hauing nothing but it selfe in it selfe, and not consisting (as all things do besides God) of many things. In which essential vnitie of God a Trinitie personall neuerthelesse subsisteth after a maner far exceeding the possibilitie of man's conceipt. The works which outwardly are of God, they are in such sort of him being one, that each person hath in them somewhat peculiar and proper. For being three, and they all subsisting in the essence of one deitie; from the Father, by the Sonne, through the Spirit all things are. That which the Sonne doth heare of the Father, and which the Spirit doth receiue of the Father & the Sonne, the same

we haue at the hāds of the Spirit as being the last, and therfore the neerest vnto vs in order, although in power the same with the second and the first. The wise and learned among the verie Heathens themselues, haue all acknowledged some first cause, whereupon originallie the being of all things dependeth. Neither haue they otherwise spoken of that cause, then as an Agent, which knowing *what* and *why* it worketh obserueth in working a most exact *order* or *lawe*. Thus much is signified by that which Homer mentioneth, Διὸς δ' ἐτελείετο βουλή. Thus much acknowledged by Mercurius Trismegist. τὸν πάντα κόσμον ἐποίησεν ὁ δημιουργὸς οὐ χερσὶν ἀλλὰ λόγῳ. Thus much cōfest by Anaxago. and Plato, terming the maker of the world an *Intellectual* worker. Finallie the Stoikes, although imagining the first cause of all things to be fire, held neuerthelesse that the same fire hauing arte, did ὁδῷ βαδίζειν ἐπὶ γενέσει κόσμου. They all cōfesse therfore in the working of that first cause, that *counsell* is vsed, *reason* followed, a *way* obserued, that is to say, constant *order* and *law* is kept, whereof it selfe must needs be author vnto it selfe. Otherwise it should haue some worthier and higher to direct it, and so could not it selfe be the first. Being the first, it can haue no other then it selfe to be the author of that law which it willingly worketh by. God therefore is a law both to himselfe, and to all other things besides. To himselfe he is a law in all those things, whereof our Sauiour speaketh, saying, *My Father worketh as yet, so I.* God worketh nothing without cause. All those things which are done by him, haue some ende for which they are done: and the ende for which they are done, is a reason of his will to do them. His will had not inclined to create woman, but that he saw it could not be wel if she were not created, *Non est bonum, It is not good man should be alone.* Therefore let vs make an helper for him. That and nothing else is done by God, which to leaue vndone were not so good. If therfore it be demanded, why God hauing power and habilitie infinite, th' effects notwithstāding of that power are all so limited as we see they are: the reason hereof is the end which he hath proposed, and the lawe whereby his wisedome hath stinted th' effects of his power in such sort, that it doth not worke infinitely but correspōdently vnto that end for which it worketh, euen al things χρηστῶς, in most decent and comely sort, all things in *measure*, *number*, and *waight*. The generall end of Gods externall working is the exercise of his most glorious and most abundant vertue: Which abundance doth shew it selfe in varietie, and for that cause this varietie is oftentimes in Scripture exprest by the name of *riches*. *The Lord hath made all things for his owne sake.* Not that any thing is

made to be beneficiall vnto him, but all things for him to shew beneficence and grace in them. The particular drift of euery acte proceeding externally from God, we are not able to discerne, and therefore cannot alwaies giue the proper and certaine reason of his works. Howbeit vndoubtedly a proper and certaine reason there is of euery finite worke of God, in as much as there is a law imposed vpon it; which if there were not, it should be infinite euen as the worker himselfe is. They erre therefore who thinke that of the will of God to do this or that, there is no reason besides his will. Many times no reason knowne to vs; but that there is no reason thereof, I iudge it most vnreasonable to imagine, in as much as he worketh all things *κατὰ τὴν βουλὴν τοῦ θελήματος ἀυτοῦ*, not only according to his owne will, but *the counsell of his owne will.* And whatsoeuer is done with counsell or wise resolution, hath of necessitie some reason why it should be done, albeit that reason be to vs in some things so secret, that it forceth the wit of man to stand, as the blessed Apostle himself doth, amazed thereat, *O the depth of the riches both of the wisdome and knowledge of God, How vnsearchable are his iudgements, &c.* That law eternall which God himself hath made to himselfe, and thereby worketh all things wherof he is the cause and author, that law in the admirable frame wherof shineth with most perfect bewtie the countenance of that wisedome which hath testified concerning her self, *The lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, euen before his works of old, I was set vp, &c.* That law which hath bene the patterne to make, and is the card to guide the world by; that law which hath bene of God, and with God euerlastingly: that law the author and obseruer whereof is one only God to be blessed for euer, how should either men or Angels be able perfectly to behold? The booke of this law we are neither able nor worthie to open and looke into. That little thereof which we darkly apprehend, we admire, the rest with religious ignorance we humbly and meekly adore. Seeing therfore that according to this law he worketh, *of whom, through whom, and for whom are all things*, although there seeme vnto vs cōfusion and disorder in th' affaires of this present world: *Tamen quoniam bonus mundum rector temperat, recte fieri cuncta ne dubites*, Let no mā doubt but that euery thing is well done, because the world is ruled by so good a guide, as transgresseth not his owne law, then which nothing can be more absolute, perfect & iust. The law whereby he worketh, is eternall, and therefore can haue no shew or cullor of mutabilitie: for which cause a part of that law being opened in the promises which God hath made (because his promises are nothing else but declarations what God will do for the good of men)

touching those promises the Apostle hath witnessed, that God may as possibly deny himselfe and not be God, as faile to performe them. And cōcerning the counsel of God, he termeth it likewise a thing *vnchangeable*, the counsell of God, and that law of God whereof now we speake being one. Nor is the freedom of the wil of God any whit abated, let or hindered by meanes of this, because the imposition of this law vpō himself is his own free and volūtary act. This law therfore we may name eternall, being *that order which God before all ages hath set down with himselfe, for himselfe to do all things by.*

I have now shown how the vocabularies of many branches of English literature had been gradually increased in copiousness, their diction refined and polished, and their grammar simplified; but there is still one department—and that, considered simply in its literary aspects, the highest—in which hitherto comparatively little had been accomplished. I mean that modification of the colloquial language of actual life, which was required to fit it for employment in the scenic representation of the various phases and conditions of humanity, as they are conceived and interpreted by the great masters of the dramatic art.

In popular farces, and in merely occasional theatrical pieces intended to serve a special temporary purpose, the colloquial language of the day may properly be employed; but in dramas designed for permanent existence, the diction of the dialogue must be of a more enduring and less changeable character than the speech of the hour, which is always more coloured by fleeting and superficial influences than is usually supposed by those who have not made the actual language of life a study.*

* Every generation, every year almost, has its pet words, applications, forms, and combinations, originating now in some accidental circumstance, now in some theory, early association, habit, or caprice of a favourite writer, which, for the time, constitute unsightly excrescences upon the body of the speech, but finally drop off and are forgotten. To take single words: it is difficult at this moment to find a page in a popular French writer, which does not contain the word préoccuper, or some of its derivatives. On the other side of the Channel, I must instance a more unfortunate case. The epithet *lovely* can fitly be used only of *beings* capable of exciting, by their moral and physical perfections, the passion

It is a proof of the acuteness of the English dramatists who lived a little before, and with, Shakespeare, that they perceived the necessity of a style somewhat removed from the vernacular speech of their time; but it is also a proof of the weakness of their judgment, that, instead of adopting a phraseology which was natural, idiomatic, and permanent, without being local or vulgar, they invented a conventional style of expression, which not only never was used in real society, but which never could be, without a violation of the laws both of language and of thought. The dialect of tragedy is not the style which men on the stage of life, influenced as they are by temporary and accidental conditions of speech, actually use, but it is the diction which, according to the permanent and essential genius of the language, and the supposed moral and intellectual categories of the personages, constitutes the truest and most precise expression of the thoughts and purposes which animate them.

Although the phraseology which the earlier English playwrights put into the mouths of their personages is in a high degree unnatural and inappropriate, yet in the wide variety of their characters, and of the circumstances in which they placed them, they not unfrequently unwittingly strayed into a fit and expressive style, and thus there was gradually accumulated a fragmentary and scattered store of material for a copious and multifarious dramatic diction.

of love, and, at the same time, of reciprocating it. That only is *lovely* which is both loveable and loving. In the affectation and exaggeration which so often characterizes the phraseology of polite society, this unhappy word was seized upon and generalized in its application, and it soon became the one epithet of commendation in young ladies' seminaries and similar circles, where it was and is applied indiscriminately to all pleasing material objects, from a piece of plum-cake to a Gothic cathedral. Ruskin unluckily adopted this school-girl triviality, and, by the popularity of his writings, has made it almost universal, thereby degrading, vulgarizing, and depriving of its true significance, one of the noblest words in the English language.

In satirical comedy such abuses of language may very well be introduced, for the sake of pillorying them. Shakespeare — whose comedy is not in the technical sense satirical — has a few examples of this sort, the most marked being in the case of the word *element* in the first scene of the third act of Twelfth Night, to which I have referred on a former occasion.

In speaking of the relations of Chaucer to his time and to the earlier literature of the language, I observed that his style of expression was eclectic, that he coined no words and imported few, but contented himself with the existing stock of native and already naturalized foreign terms — the excellence of his diction consisting in the judgment and taste of his selection, and his mutual adaptation of terms individually familiar.

For the purposes of Chaucer and his age, for the expression of the limited range of thought and subject with which the English nature of his time was conversant, a limited vocabulary sufficed, and the existing literature of England supplied nearly the entire stock of words demanded for the uses of the poet.

But in Shakespeare's day, though humanity, English humanity especially, was still the same, yet the philosophical conception of humanity was immensely enlarged, diversified, and enriched. The myriad-minded Shakespeare—as, by an application of a term borrowed from one of the Greek fathers, Coleridge has so appropriately called him—took in this vast conception in all its breadth, and was endowed with a faculty of self-transformation into all the shapes in which the nature of man has been incarnated. He hence required a variety of phraseologies—words and combinations of words—as great as the varieties of humanity itself are numerous.

Now this compass and flexibility of expression could be found only in the language of a people who possessed such a moral and intellectual constitution, and had enjoyed such a moral and social training, as had previously fallen to the lot of no modern nation.

The English people, as I have before observed, is a composite nation, resulting from the fusion of a Germanic with a Scandinavian and a Gallo-Roman race. Its language is made up of ingredients derived from sources as varied as its blood, and England thus unites, in its children and its speech, the ethnological elements, which, in their separate action in the social and

political life of Continental Europe, have shown themselves most efficient in all great and worthy achievement.

In the political history and condition of the England of Elizabeth's time, there were circumstances eminently favourable to many-sided intellectual progress, and to the development of a wide variety of individual character. Although the different nationalities, which had contributed to the population of England, had become so far amalgamated as to have produced a recognizable uniformity of character, yet the chemical combination had not been so complete as wholly to extinguish the separate traits of each. These had propagated, and still propagate, themselves more or less unmixed, from century to century, just as, in human and brute life, peculiarities of remote ancestry manifest themselves in late descendants, and often reappear in lines where for generations they had seemed to be extinct. Hence, the English have in all ages been remarkable for individuality, and what we call originality, or, if you please, eccentricity or oddity of character.

These supposed individualities usually combine, with something that is peculiar to the man John or Peter, much more that is common to a nation, a family, or a class, and the eccentric person is, in reality, oftener a typical or representative man than an anomaly. He is noticed as a strange or peculiar individual, not because his character is a departure from the general laws of humanity, but because he is, locally or chronologically, separated from the class to which he belongs, and we observe him as an isolated phenomenon, not as an instance of a species.*

* True imaginative conception of character, whether in dramatic or in narrative literature, depends more upon power of observation than of invention. The truest personages in fiction are those most accurately copied from actual life, and the impression produced upon us by a character in a work of imagination is just in proportion to the degree in which we recognize it as real. We do not know, historically, how far Shakespeare drew from individual nature, how far his personages are portraits; but modern criticism and literary history are continually accumulating evidence to prove that all great artists record what they see, much more frequently than they invent what they have never witnessed.

Modern English literature has not produced a more Shakespearian — I might

The free development of these various forms and types of humanity in England has been much favoured by a detached geographical position, which has protected the nation against controlling foreign influences, by the extended commerce and navigation, which its long line of coast, its numerous harbours, its coal and tin, the excellent quality of its wool, and some other native products, have secured to it, and perhaps in a still greater degree by the character of its political institutions, which have been, from a remote age, of a more popular and liberal character than those of any of the great Continental states.

English life, in the sixteenth century, was full of multifarious experiences. There had always been a greater number and variety of stimulating tendencies and influences, and greater practical liberty of yielding to them, in England than in any other modern nation; and consequently, in the time of Shakespeare, the human intellect, the human heart, affections, and passions, were there more fully and variously developed, and the articulate expression of all these mental and moral conditions and impulses more cultivated and diversified, than in any contemporaneous people.

In all the facilities for the observation of human life and nature on a wide and comprehensive scale, the Englishman of Shakespeare's time was at a more advanced point than has even yet been reached in the society of any other of the Gothic or Romance nations. This is one of the reasons why the plays of Shakespeare have such an incontestable superiority over the drama of all other modern countries, and why so many thoughts which, in the recent literature of Continental Europe, have been hailed as new revelations, are, to the Englishman, but the thousandth repetition of old and familiar oracles, or generalizations

say a more original — comic character than Lever's Major Monsoon in Charles O'Malley. But Major Monsoon is well known to be a minutely accurate portrait of the character, a faithful chronicle of the sayings and doings, of a real living person.

which have, from time immemorial, been matters of too universal and every-day consciousness to have been thought worthy of a place in English literature at all.

Shakespeare stood, to the age of Elizabeth and of James, in just the position which Chaucer occupied with respect to that of Edward III. and of Richard II.; and in these two authors, the genius and the literature of their respective ages reached its culminating point. For the excellence of each, all preceding English history and literature was a necessary preparation, and the dialect of each was composed by an application of the same principles to the philological material which earlier labourers had gathered for them.

The material thus prepared for the two great masters of the English tongue was in a very different state when it passed under their respective manipulation; and it may be seriously questioned whether, simply as a philological constructor, Chaucer were not the greater architect of the two. In Chaucer's time, every department of the language was rude, defective, and unpolished, and the task of enriching, harmonizing, and adapting was performed by him alone. Shakespeare had been preceded by a multitude of skilful artists, who had improved and refined all the various special vocabularies which make up the totality of the English language; and the common dialect which more or less belongs to all imaginative composition had been carried by others to almost as high a pitch of perfection as is found in Shakespeare himself.

Chaucer, as a linguistic reformer, had great advantages over Shakespeare, in possessing a better philological training. He grew up in an almost equal familiarity with French, then a highly cultivated dialect, and with his mother tongue, and he was also well acquainted with Latin and with Italian; but we have no reason to believe that Shakespeare had acquired anything more than the merest smattering of any language but his own.

But although the dialect of Shakespeare does not exhibit the

same relative superiority as that of Chaucer over all older and contemporaneous literature, its absolute superiority is, nevertheless, unquestionable. I have before had occasion to remark that the greatest authors very often confine themselves to a restricted vocabulary, and that the power of their diction lies, not in the multitude of words, but in skilful combination and adaptation of a few. This is strikingly verified by an examination of the stock of words employed by Shakespeare. He introduces, indeed, terms borrowed from every art and every science, from all theoretical knowledge and all human experience; but his entire vocabulary little exceeds fifteen thousand words, and of these a large number, chiefly of Latin origin, occur but once or at most twice in his pages. The affluence of his speech arises from variety of combination, not from numerical abundance. And yet the authorized vocabulary of Shakespeare's time probably embraced twice or thrice the number of words which he found necessary for his purposes; for though there were at that time no dictionaries which exhibit a great stock of words, yet in perusing Hooker, the old translators, and the early voyagers and travellers, we find a verbal wealth, a copiousness of diction, which forms a singular contrast with the philological economy of the great dramatist.

In his theory of dramatic construction, Shakespeare owes little — in his conception of character, nothing — to earlier or contemporary artists; but in his diction, everything except felicity of selection and combination. The existence of the whole copious English vocabulary was necessary, in order that his marvellous gift of selection might have room for its exercise. Without a Cimabue and a Giotto, a Fra Angelico and a Perugino, there could not have been a Raphael; and all previous English philology and literature were indispensable to the creation of a medium, through which such revelations of man as had not yet been made to man might be possible to the genius of a Shakespeare.

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